

The Life and Death of Leonard Warren *by Alan Wagner*

# high fidelity

JUNE THE MAGAZINE FOR MUSIC LISTENERS 60 CENTS

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## TOWARDS STEREO COMPATIBILITY

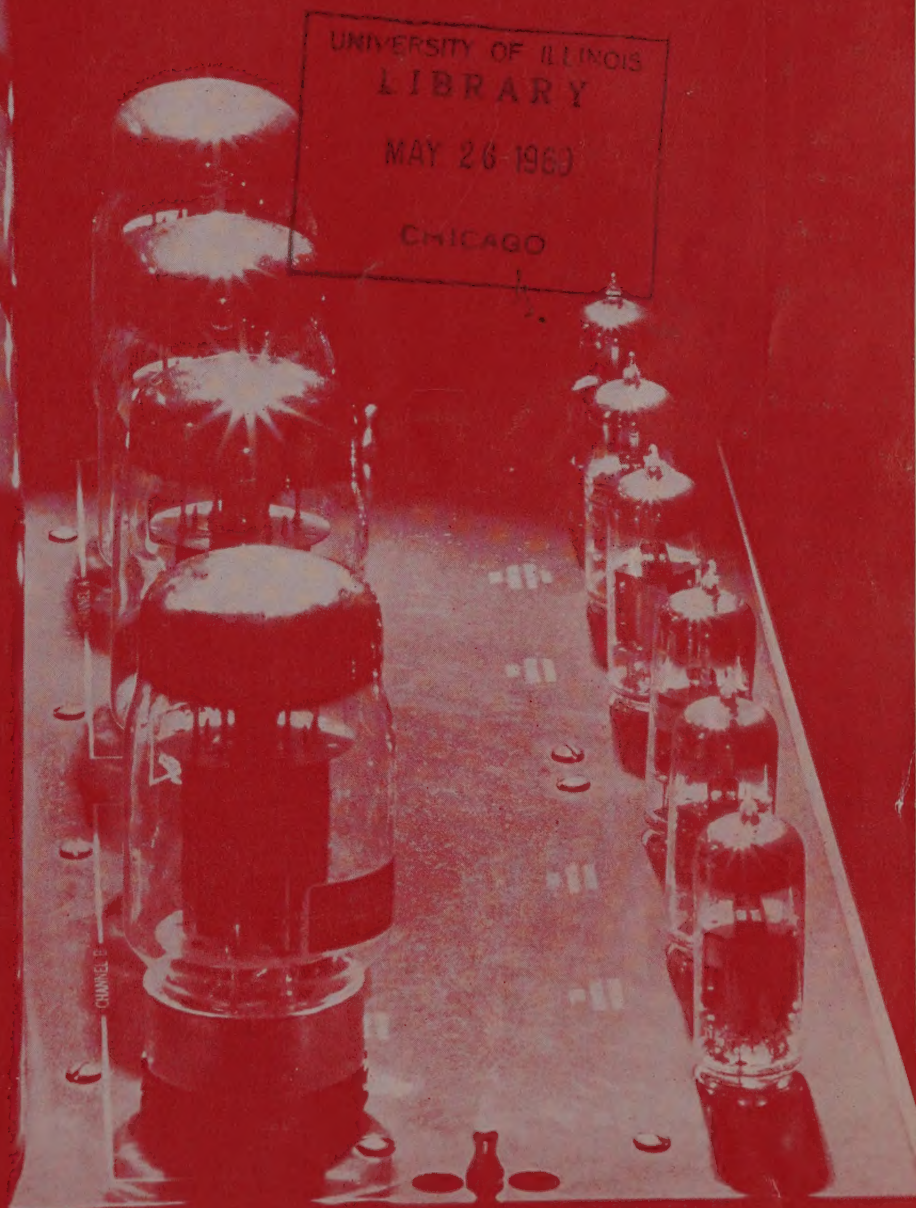
by Ralph Freas

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## FIREBIRD'S FIRST FLIGHT

by Igor Stravinsky

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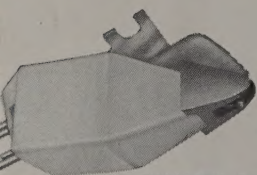
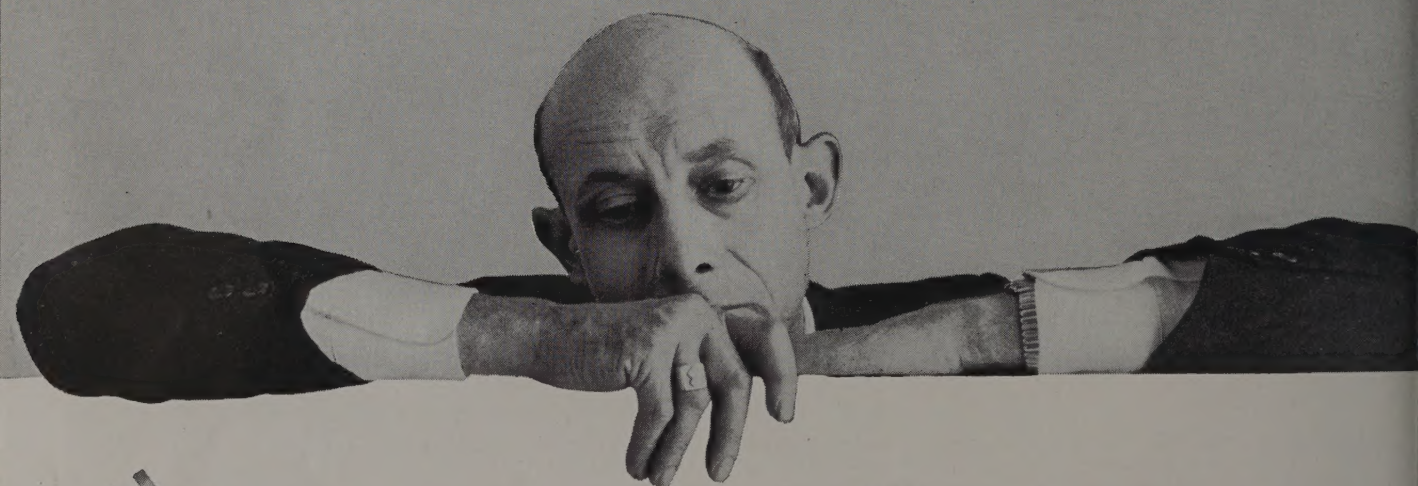
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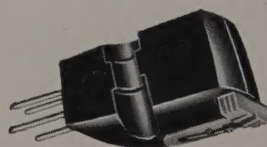
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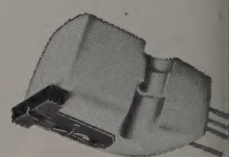
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


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# high fidelity

JUNE 1960  
volume 10 number 6

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**Firebird's First Flight** 34 Igor Stravinsky  
*The composer talks about the work which, at its Paris premiere just fifty years ago this month, sounded the first brilliant fanfare of his career.*

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*A lifetime of dedication produced the great baritone voice we will no longer hear on any stage.*

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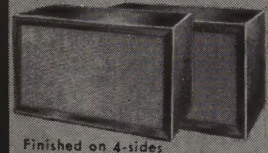
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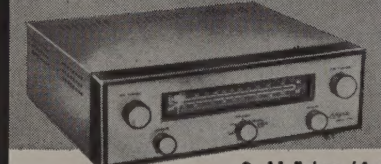
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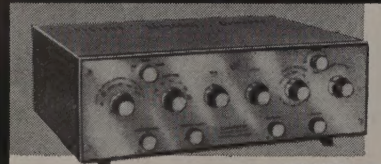
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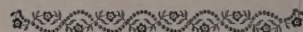
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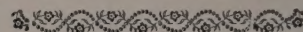
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### AUTHORitatively Speaking

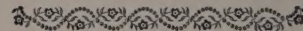
The parental wish for Igor Stravinsky was that he pursue the Law, which course he followed, with due filial piety, until he was twenty-three. Early influences (after all, Stravinsky senior was a leading bass of the St. Petersburg Opera) and his own propensities prevailed, however; before he was thirty, Stravinsky had attained an international reputation as a composer. The event that brought him immediate fame was the Paris premiere of his ballet *The Firebird*, a first-hand account of which we are privileged to have here (p. 34). During the fifty years that have elapsed since that triumphal occasion, he has remained one of the greatest and most controversial figures in twentieth-century music. An author as well as composer, Stravinsky has written his own biography *Chronicles of My Life*, and *Poetics of Music*. Forthcoming from Doubleday later this year will be his *Memories and Commentaries and Expositions and Developments*.



Some time ago we commissioned Alan Wagner, author of "New Golden Age of Opera" in our January issue and director of WNYC's program "Living Opera," to write a profile of Leonard Warren. Mr. Wagner duly interviewed Mr. Warren, and a few days later attended the Met to hear him sing Don Carlo in *Forza del destino*. On that night, on stage in the opera house, Leonard Warren died. Mr. Wagner's story of the late great baritone appears on p. 37.



We recently asked Charles Fowler, cofounder and former publisher of this magazine, to tell us all about his current *curriculum vitae*. He replied that since his duties for HIGH FIDELITY have decreased he is enjoying considerably more "vitae" and is burdened with less "curriculum." Mr. Fowler continues to write for various publications, and rumor hath it that he is also at work on a new book. For his latest contribution to HIGH FIDELITY, turn to p. 40.



Robert Shelton, author of "Folkways in Sound," p. 42, is a young man employed by the *New York Times* as a copy editor on the desk that handles music, art, radio, TV, and theatre news. Though he likes folk music and reviews folk music records, he confesses that he has the sort of folk singing voice best heard when surrounded by a large and able chorus.

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"Then, too, the fact that the arm of the Weathers turntable will track perfectly and correctly at less than two grams of weight, is a guarantee to the customer that he will get the maximum play, and add longer life to his expensive records.

"Another important feature of the Weathers turntable is the dampened arm. If it should slip out of your hand when being placed on a record for play, damage to the needle is completely eliminated.

"Of all the competitive turntables we have carried, we have had the least trouble with Weathers, which is a most important consideration. Unlike other products which come back because of numerous adjustments, and have to be resold to the customer, Weathers stays sold.

"These are just some of the many reasons why our company confidently recommends the Weathers turntable to every stereophile."



IRVING FINKEL, President  
IFA Electronics, Encino, California

## How Good Should a Turntable Be?

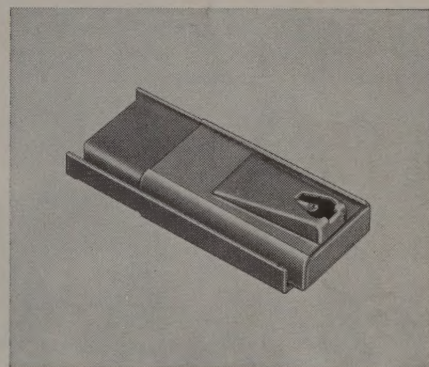
To call a turntable just "acceptable", means it must simply perform to standards which are tolerable to most listeners. However, for it to be "essentially perfect", the turntable must be so good that even the most critical listener is unable to detect any wow, flutter, pitch deviation, or rumble from it. The ideal turntable, then, will perform so well in all respects that the quality of the program will be limited by the recordings themselves rather than by the turntable.

Performance figures which appear to meet this requirement are 0.1% total wow and flutter, and —0.1% deviation from nominal speed under any normal working conditions. These are obviously far higher standards than are usually demanded of turntables, but they must be met if the turntable is to support a claim of "top quality". The speed accuracy figure is particularly difficult to maintain unless a synchronous drive motor is used. Even this can cause poor flutter characteristics if its "cogging" tendency isn't filtered out by the drive system or the flywheel effect of a heavy turntable. Induction motors, whose speed varies with load and with varying line voltage, must be used with a

vernier speed control of some sort if they are to give absolute speed accuracy.

Rumble is harder to pin down to a desirable figure, since it depends so much on so many other factors. In this case, the safest thing to do is get the rumble so much lower than that from discs that it can never compete with the recorded rumble. And if the rumble frequency is reduced to below the range of audibility (as was done in the Weathers synchronous turntable), rumble can be dropped to a level where it will never become audible under any circumstances.

Weathers turntables meet all of these stringent requirements, and while it would undoubtedly be possible to improve this turntable further, additional improvement would be rather pointless.



## Weathers Field-Tests New Pickup

A few preproduction lab models of the revolutionary new Weathers Professional Stereo cartridges, distributed among local hi-fi perfectionists, are eliciting rave reports the like of which Weathers hasn't heard since the first models of the now-famous FM monophonic pickup were released.

The most frequent comment: "The dog-gone thing tracks cleanly on the 'worst' stereo discs I own, and at one gram, yet!"

All the users have declared they aren't going to give their pickups back, and not even the proposed sale price of the unit has shaken their resolve. Explained one, "It's worth more than that to me to be able to enjoy all my stereo discs, and not have them wear out with a few playings."

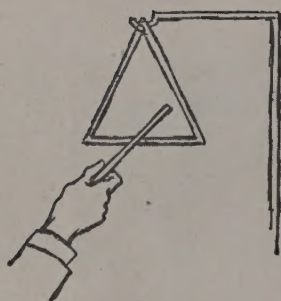
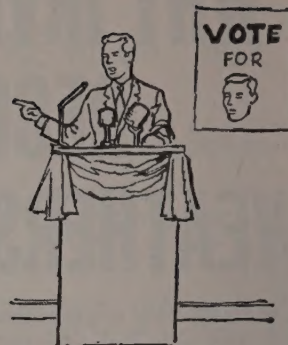
For more information on Weathers components, write today to Weathers Industries, a Division of Advance Industries, Inc., 66 East Gloucester Pike, Barrington, N. J. Dept. HF-6.



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# ideal of a speaker system



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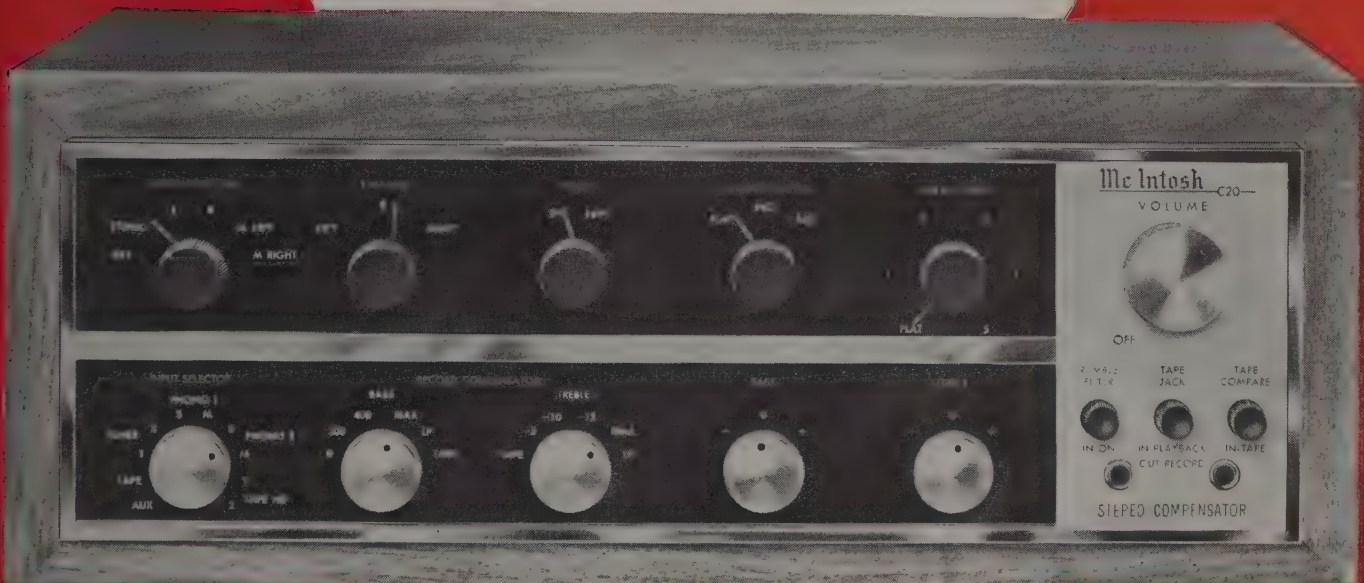
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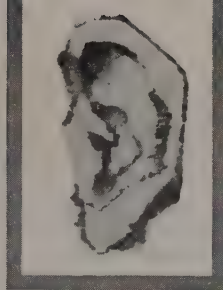
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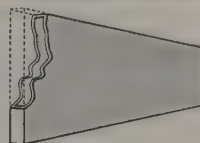
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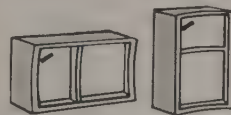


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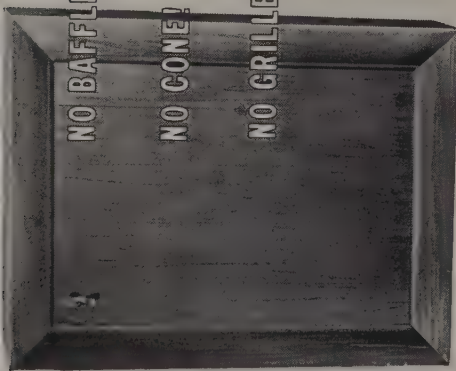
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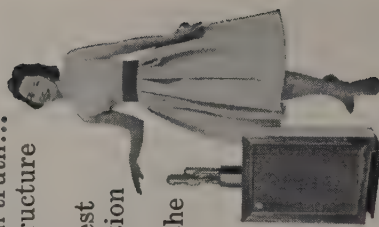


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## Notes from Abroad



LONDON—It took Victor Olof, HMV's recording supervisor, most of two years to hit upon a week when Paul Kletzki, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, and Murray Dickie would alike be free of engagements elsewhere and ready to record Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* with the Philharmonia Orchestra. Kletzki was preempted for months on end by his orchestral commitments in the States, as well as by tight conducting schedules over here. Murray Dickie was similarly tied by his duties with the Vienna State and other Continental opera houses. With Fischer-Dieskau's intensive double career in opera and on Lieder platforms, the problem was, to begin with, even more intractable. Probably it would have been more convenient to make the recording in Berlin or Vienna; but these alternatives were ruled out on artistic grounds, EMI taking the view that for Mahler's score the Philharmonia woodwind choir has a certain edge on its Continental rivals.

As the appointed week for the sessions approached, there was a touch of trepidation. Although optionally for baritone, the numbers in *Das Lied* allocated to Fischer-Dieskau are usually sung by contralto. The question in the air was whether any baritone version could possibly live up to the famed recording made for Decca (London Records in the U. S.) by the late Kathleen Ferrier, with Julius Patzak and the Vienna Philharmonic under Bruno Walter.

There were seven three-hour sessions at the Abbey Road studios of EMI. The first was a run-through, with recording tests. Fischer-Dieskau and Murray Dickie appeared on the singers' dais side by side *pro tem*, an astonishing sight. The baritone is over six feet tall, the tenor nearer five feet. ("Who would have thought," someone wrote after hearing Dickie's "*Il mio tesoro*" at London's Cambridge Theatre thirteen years ago, "that so small a young man had that much breath in him?") During the actual recording, the pair did not meet. Dickie sang at daytime sessions, Fischer-Dieskau, who finds he sings best at night, at late ones. As is the usual practice here, separate teams were used for monophonic and stereo versions. Mahler's sublimely odd sound patterns involved much jockeying for instrumental positions before Olof was satisfied with balance. In particular the two supplementary harps in the last movement were moved from pillar to post. A place was finally found for them halfway down the first violins, on the conductor's side.

On two discs, with the Adagietto from Mahler's Symphony No. 5 as filler, *Das Lied von der Erde* is expected out in America on the Angel label in October. After listening to test pressings of the monophonic run, I

agree that on technical grounds the Abbey Road team has reason to rub its hands. One of the trickier challenges is the tenor's opening phrase (translated into German from the Chinese of Li-Tai-Po), "*Schön winkt der Wein. . .*" The problem is how to make the first three tenor notes pierce the accompanying fizz and tension of strings, woodwind, and trumpet tone. Dickie pierces like a silver skewer. There is even more breath in him than thirteen years ago. (Balance of a more subtle kind is evident in the *Abschied* section. As Fischer-Dieskau sings the closing lines—" . . . *Allüberall und ewig/blauen Licht die Fernin! Ewig . . . ewig . . .*"—the ripple of the celesta, the mordant mandolin notes, and the swaying motif of the harps, all at *p* or *pp* level, emerge with delicacy, precision, and color.

**To Come from Capitol.** Notes about some Capitol recordings which may be expected out on your side in the next months follow:

In the Rome Opera House, with the theatre's orchestra and chorus and singers Shakeh Vartenissian (soprano), Fiorenza Cossoto (contralto), Eugenio Fernandi (tenor), and Boris Christoff (bass), veteran Tullio Serafin conducted Verdi's *Requiem* in circumstances which the technicians involved remember with a wince. No sooner had the recording session started than contractors' men moved in and started taking up floors for urgent structural repairs. Some sort of treaty was arranged between the contractor's foreman and the recording team to insure peace and quiet at stated times. Nevertheless, hammering often obtruded upon red-light sessions. One of the martyrs recalls, "No sooner did we put a stop to hammering in one place than it broke out in another: At one stage a waterpipe burst, and we found ourselves in water up to the knees. At another, stage dust got into our machines. You should have heard some of the gritty playback!" The ten sessions included a good

many retakes.



Silvestri

Yehudi Menuhin has remade the Beethoven Violin Concerto with the Vienna Philharmonic under Constantin Silvestri. His last recording of it, with Furtwängler, is now ten years old. It has sold prodigiously,

but, especially since stereo, it is sonically outdated. In any case, Menuhin as an artist has moved on since 1950. The choice of conductor for the remake raised an eyebrow or

Continued on page 14



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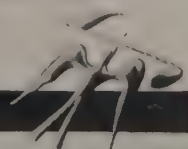
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## NOTES FROM ABROAD

Continued from page 12

two. Some people consider that Silvestri is much too exuberantly romantic for Beethoven, especially the Beethoven of Op. 61. Menuhin does not share this opinion. After the playback, he pronounced Silvestri both a dynamic conductor and a true lover of the classics.

Another visitor to Vienna was Sir Malcolm Sargent, who flew out from London to record half a dozen Rossini overtures, taking with him his own scores and principal band parts at a cost of £22 excess baggage. After his markings had been transferred to the band parts of the Vienna Philharmonic, he conducted four sessions with that orchestra. At the end of *William Tell* he spoke of the way the divided cellos had played the overture's opening section. "No other cellos in the world," he said, "can play like that. It was true chamber music playing."

CHARLES REID



MILAN—Italy has sponsored two major renaissances of old music in the past decade or two: the first was the rediscovery of Vivaldi, and the second, just getting under way, is the extraordinary interest in Italian operas of the eighteenth century. You can turn on RAI (the Italian national radio network) every fortnight and hear an enchanting opera by Paisiello, or Cimarosa, or Sarti, usually broadcast direct from a theatre, but sometimes specially revised and taped for the radio; more important, you can go to Naples, or Rome, or Palermo, or Milan and actually see them. In view of the average operatic bill of the season, it comes as quite a shock to walk past the majestic doors of the Scala in Milan and read, on the billboard, Paisiello's (not Rossini's) *Barber of Seville* or *Le Astuzie femminili* by Domenico Cimarosa, in addition to the usual *Tosca*, *Traviata*, and *Aidas*.

These operas of the *settecento* are performed, not in the "big house" (as Scala officials refer to it), but in a separate little theatre in another section of the building. The Piccola Scala productions are rather costly, for a new production usually runs not more than four times before it is whisked off the boards, often forever. We made this sad discovery when we went to Milan especially to hear the Paisiello *Barber*, the Piccola Scala production of which we'd been told was something of a sensation. After learning that we had just missed the fourth (and last) performance, we must have looked very glum.

"It's not as though you won't hear it again," said a representative from the Scala. "Ricordi has already taped it." We had known that the huge and powerful publishing house of Ricordi (also in Milan) had entered the recording business with a smash

Continued on page 16

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Continued from page 14

hit (Callas in *Medea*); but we hadn't realized how far the firm was branching out.

**Ricordi Records.** Ricordi's premises—in comparison with those of the famous music publishers of Vienna, Mainz, or London—are also a considerable shock. Used to the dingy respectability of the Universal Edition (Vienna) or Schott (Mainz), the high-powered, chromium-finished modernity of Ricordi's Milan offices struck us as being far more New World than Old. Attractive, multilingual secretaries dashed in and out of glass doors, and soundless automatic elevators deposited visitors with real American efficiency.

As we were waiting for an appointment, the sound of an E flat aria from Paisiello's *Barber* wafted down the hall from one of the cutting rooms. We had taken it for granted that the Ricordi *Barber* had used the Scala cast, but in fact contractual difficulties made it necessary to replace all except one of the Scala's singers; as in most of Ricordi's old music productions, the orchestra was the Virtuosi di Roma conducted by Fasano. Apart from the Paisiello, Ricordi has taped a new *Lucia*, *Il Cambiale di matrimonio* (Rossini's first opera), Pergolesi's *La Serva padrona*, and a much needed new version of Rossini's *Petite Messe solenne*.

We understand that Ricordi's epoch-making decision to go into the recording business has created a deep impression on other publishing houses, particularly in Austria and Germany. The head of the Universal Edition, on hearing of Ricordi's plan, said flatly that it will not be long before the record replaces the printed page as a medium between composer and public.

**Cetra Reëmerges.** Not only Ricordi has been busy making eighteenth-century operas. The old and well-known firm of Cetra has emerged from its relative obscurity (as far as England and America are concerned) with a dazzling list of *settecento* operas. These include Haydn's *Lo Speziale* (on a Goldoni text), a lovely work by Paisiello—perhaps the best of the set—called *Nina, ovvero La pazza per amore*, Martini's *L'impressario delle canarie*, Valentino Fioravanti's *Le Cantatrici villane* (conducted by Mario Rossi), and no less than *three* Pergolesi operas. Most of these works have been cut to fit on one 12-inch LP (an exception is the three-record *Nina*), and are attractively boxed with a complete libretto (but no notes, curiously enough). The performances range from very good to very bad (the Martini opera is conducted by someone who has no idea about eighteenth-century music), but we have very much enjoyed the series. Incidentally, the music will come as a distinct shock to many Mozartians: so much of what we think is typically Mozart is only the common lan-

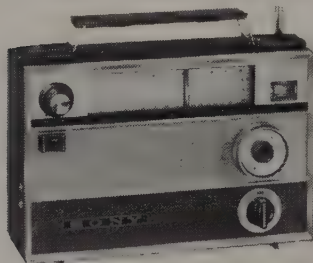
Continued on page 18



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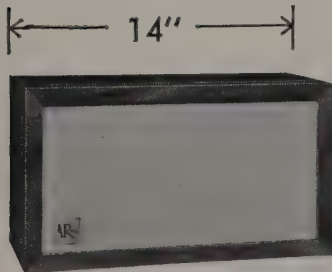
The tweeter system of the AR-3, including crossover and cabinet, is now available separately as the AR-3<sup>t</sup>. It will convert an AR-1 or AR-1W to the equivalent of an AR-3.

The super-tweeter of this system, also with crossover and cabinet, is available separately as the AR-3<sup>st</sup>. It converts an AR-2 to the equivalent of an AR-2a, or it may be added to an AR-1.

Literature on these units is available for the asking.

\*U. S. Patent 2,775,309

\*\*Patent applied for

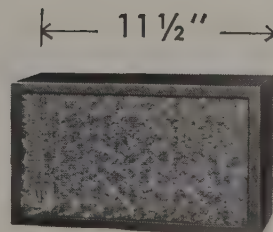


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## NOTES FROM ABROAD

*Continued from page 16*

guage of the period, perfected perhaps by Mozart, but by no means his invention.

H. C. ROBBINS LONDON

PARIS—Johann Christian Bach, J. S.'s youngest son, lived in Italy for a few years before moving to London and becoming "the English Bach." At Milan in 1757, when he was twenty-two and a recent convert from the Lutheran to the Roman Catholic faith, he composed a *Dies Irae* for double choir, organ, and orchestra. The piece remained unpublished, and eventually became just an item for musicologists.

Now it has been miraculously and magnificently revived. Lumen, a relatively small French company with some big ideas, has recorded it at the Sant' Angelo Church in Milan, with soloists, the *Coro Polifonico* of Turin, and the *Angelicum Orchestra*—Ruggero Maghini conducting. The result is an excellent example of what learning and taste—and stereo—can do for us when they are combined with commercial courage.

The disc is part of a series called "*Les Archives Sonores de la Musique Sacrée*," on which Lumen has been working for the last three years and which the Helicon Press of Baltimore will start bringing out in America towards the end of this year. Lumen has had the support of Catholic Church authorities and the enthusiastic coöperation of scholars and musicians in half a dozen European countries, for its grand design is to provide record listeners with nothing less than a complete documentary history of religious music during the last nineteen centuries.

The method is to select representative peaks of inspiration and then try to restore each to its original glory. So far fifteen albums have appeared in France, four are devoted to Gregorian chant; the others include polyphonic, orchestral, and organ works by—in addition to the Bach already mentioned—Josquin Des Prez, Philipp de Monte, Joan Cererols, Narciso Casanoves, Frescobaldi, Nicolas Lebegue, Pietro Cavalli, Handel, Michael Haydn, Sammartini, Giuseppe Sarti, and Mozart. Eventually the series will go back to sources in pre-Christian cultures, and also explore Byzantine, Ambrosian, Gallican, and Mozarabic chant. On many discs the sound itself is full of history, since some of the recordings have been made in famous churches in Paris, Antwerp, Milan, and Bologna, and others in the Spanish monastery of Montserrat.

The unfamiliarity of several of the names listed above may suggest the vast amount of original research that has been undertaken. Each album in the French edition contains a full text with a translation, and elaborate analytical and historical notes by a recognized expert. I hope the American edition does not skip on these notes, for they have

*Continued on page 20*



## SENSITIVE

H. H. Scott's famous Wide-Band Circuitry makes this the most sensitive tuner available for under \$180! Sensitivity 2.5 uv (IHF standards). Hear for yourself - weak stations sound better than you ever thought possible.

## HEAR MORE STATIONS

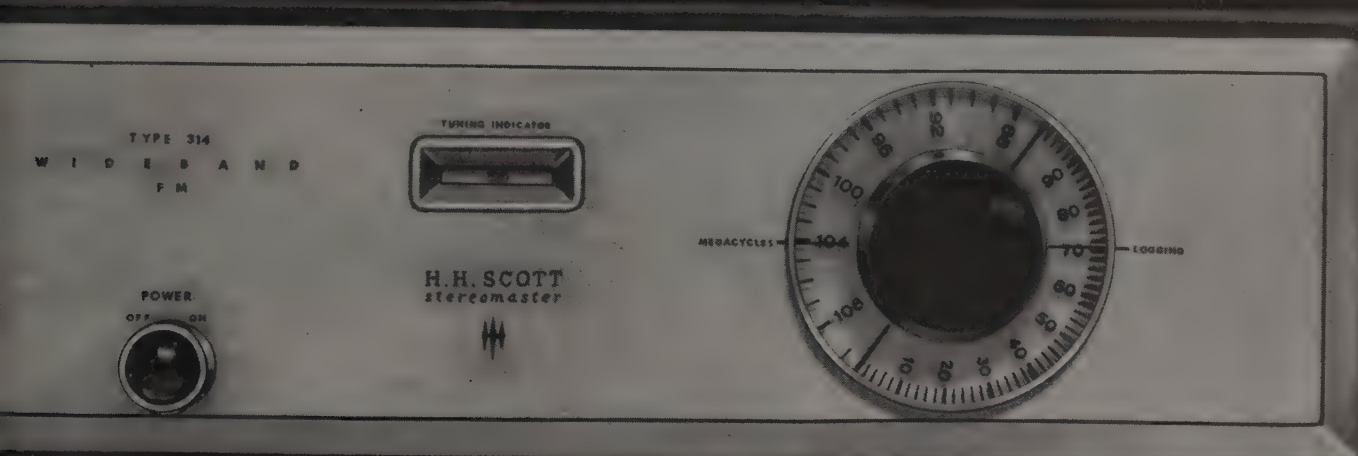
H. H. Scott's unique wide-band transformers separate stations so close together you were never able to listen to them before.

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The same silver-plated Wide-Band front end... the same copper bonded to aluminum chassis... the same Wide-Band detector found in all H. H. Scott tuners.



# new FM TUNER

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There at last is an H. H. Scott Wide-Band FM tuner at a modest price. The new 314 ranks with the very finest FM tuners available. H. H. Scott's exclusive Wide-Band design delivers more distortion-free sensitivity; long range reliability; better station separation, even when measured by stringent IHF standards. The fine performance of this unit is made possible by the use of special Wide-Band circuit components manufactured exclusively for H. H. Scott. The new 314 measures a compact 15½ wide x 5¼ high x 13¼ deep. Listen to this fine tuner at authorized H. H. Scott dealers everywhere. You'll be amazed at the fine performance it offers at this price.

perfect match to the popular H. H. Scott 2 stereo amplifier.



Circle 78 on Reader-Service Card



## H. H. SCOTT

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- ☐ Please rush me complete technical specifications on your new 314 Wide-Band FM tuner.
- ☐ Also include your new catalog and award winning booklet "How To Use High Fidelity Components in Your Decorating Plans".

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Export: Telesco International, 36 W. 40th St., N.Y.C.

\*West of Rockies \$116.95



Continued from page 18

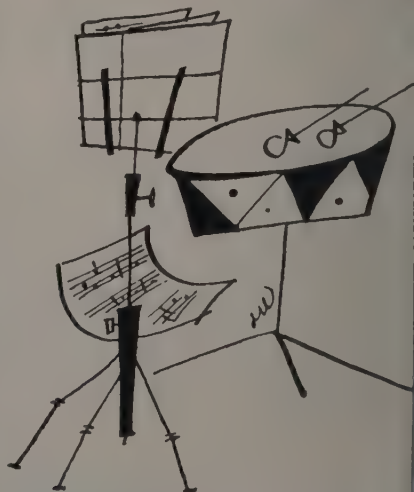
independent value. Every conceivable kind of information is given; there is organ registration in detail, for example, and for the unjustly neglected Michael Haydn a forty-three-page booklet is provided.

Clerics and Sonics. The musical editor and recording supervisor for this project is a dashing, middle-aged, gaily erudite man, the Abbé Carl de Nys, who is well known to French listeners as a radio commentator and to French disc makers as an adviser on sacred music. I spent part of a recent morning with him listening to tape and new records in a studio near the Champs-Élysées and found him thoroughly sold on stereo.

"Listen to these basses," he said, "and answer each other across the church." I listened and was impressed. "Now," he said, "listen to this. It's just eleven young Frenchmen, and they sound like Cossacks. That is partly the effect of the Eastern rite, of course, which they are singing at the proper intervals—that's the secret of the big sound all Russian choirs manage to achieve. But here stereo gives you the deepness and perspective of reality." He joined the tape choir, singing in a confident, swelling priestly baritone and waving his hands in a way reminiscent of Leopold Stokowski. Then he signaled his assistant, and out of the speakers came the rapid, twanging chant of a Greek monk, recorded by the Abbé at the monastery on Athos.

I wondered how he managed to get so much done (he is a full-time priest at Epinal in eastern France). "I am lucky," he said. "My bishop likes music. Now listen to this. In this ancient rite the priest walks around the church knocking on a piece of wood, and at each extremity of the cross he knocks three times." I know very well that one should beware of suggestion in the stereo illusion, but I am still quite sure that I heard the monk go round the studio, knocking piously at the right places. "Amusing, *n'est-ce pas?*" the Abbé said.

ROY McMULLEN



# A Crowning Achievement!

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REGARDLESS OF PRICE  
WILL OUTPERFORM THE

new *Connoisseur* F2S



For the first time in transcription turntable design, you have the ultimate in performance at a practical price. This remarkable new 2-speed Stereo turntable, with its hysteresis synchronous drive, assures you the superb quality offered by any fine turntable regardless of its price. Custom-crafted and succinctly assembled, each is a work of art. No mass production methods here—merely the unsurpassed skill of fine English craftsmen working to watch-like precision. Compare these specifications with any other turntable on the market costing considerably more. You'll be amazed!

• Hysteresis synchronous motor drive for 33½ and 45 rpm recordings.

• Rumble factor: —50 db when referred to 7 cm/sec. at 1000 cycle signal.

• Wow content is less than .15% and flutter down to .1%.

• Hum level is down 80 decibels.

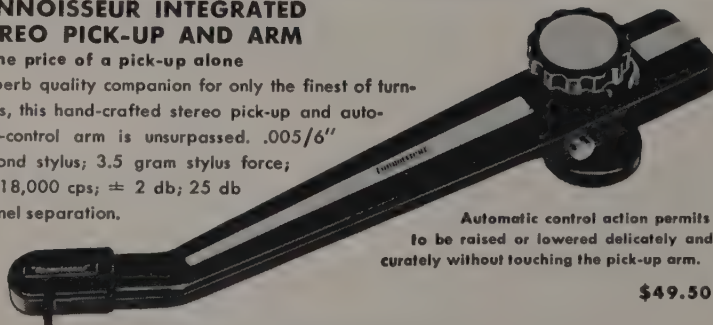
**\$59.50** NET

Formica-covered base—optional for  
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## CONNOISSEUR INTEGRATED STEREO PICK-UP AND ARM

for the price of a pick-up alone

A superb quality companion for only the finest of turntables, this hand-crafted stereo pick-up and automatic-control arm is unsurpassed. .005/6" diamond stylus; 3.5 gram stylus force; 20—18,000 cps; ± 2 db; 25 db Channel separation.



Automatic control action permits arm to be raised or lowered delicately and accurately without touching the pick-up arm.

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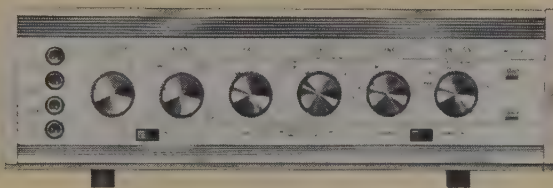


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again and again—  
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AGAIN!



Model S-5000 20+20 watt "stereo"  
Dual Amplifier-Preamplifier, Fair Trade Price—\$189.50

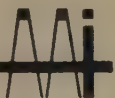


Model S-2200 FM-AM-MX Stereo tuner,  
Fair Trade Price—\$179.50



### AMERICAN AUDIO INSTITUTE

394 EAST 18th ST. PATERSON 4, N.J.



October 27, 1959

Sherwood Electronic Labs., Inc.  
4300 North California Avenue  
Chicago 18, Illinois

Gentlemen:

We find that the incorporation of a center-channel output and a damping factor selector in July, 1959, increases the Summary Rating of the Sherwood S-5000 to the highest of all 18 Stereo Amplifiers tested in the AAI Evaluation Test Reports.

Sincerely,

AMERICAN AUDIO INSTITUTE

*Felix R. Bremy*  
Felix R. Bremy  
Executive Director

The "Most honored of them all" S-5000 stereo amplifier-preamplifier is joined by the S-2200 stereo tuner. As with its "Top Rated" predecessors, the S-2200 features FM "Interchannel Hush" plus push button selector, internal plug-in adaptor for Stereo FM Multiplex, 2 "Acro-beam" tuning indicators, simulcast FM/AM stereo. All Sherwood tuners feature FM sensitivity below 0.95 microvolts and 1/3% distortion @ 100% FM. For further details write: Sherwood Electronic Laboratories, Inc., 4300 N. California Avenue, Chicago 18, Illinois.



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FOR INTEGRITY IN MUSIC...



ASR-8-80 Stereo Amplifier

When your amplifier adds or subtracts not one nuance of sound . . . you enjoy Integrity in Music. This concept of pure, unadulterated reproduction has been manifested most recently in Stromberg-Carlson's 8-80 stereo amplifier. Its combination of features, performance and price—its control versatility and listening quality—make it the most unusual value ever offered in high fidelity.

**ASR-8-80 Specifications:** *Power:* 64 watts (2-32-watt channels); *Response:* 20-20,000 cps  $\pm 0.9$  db; *Distortion:* Harmonic: less than 0.6% at full output; IM: less than 1% at program level; Hum & Noise: down 70 db. A plus B output for center speaker system; *Price:* \$199.95, Zone 1, gold and white finish, top cover extra.

Another amplifier featuring Stromberg-Carlson integrity is the dual channel ASR-433. Each channel provides 12 watts of exceptionally clean, balanced power. The control and performance are excellent.

The deliberately conservative specifications include: frequency response 20-20,000 cps; harmonic distortion less than 1% at full output; IM distortion less than 1% at program level; hum and noise 63 db down. Top cover available in gold and white or black and brushed chrome. ASR-433 . . . \$129.95.\*

Stromberg-Carlson now offers 16 equipment cabinets in a wide variety of styles and finishes. They are designed to house complete Stromberg-Carlson stereo component systems and are factory assembled. They reproduce as faithfully as separately mounted components because of a unique mounting method that isolates the speaker systems from the other sensitive components.

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\*Prices audiophile net, Zone 1, less base, subject to change.



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A DIVISION OF **GENERAL DYNAMICS**

CIRCLE 34 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



and now . . .  
an independent tone arm  
that measures up to  
**SHURE**  
**STANDARDS**



for use with any quality cartridge  
... monophonic or stereo

*new safety  
for records*

Surface wear is held to absolute minimum through flawless tracking made possible by an ingenious and unprecedented combination of adjustments. Optimum static and dynamic balance, precise height, correct cartridge "overhang," and incredibly accurate stylus force are quickly achieved and easily maintained without guesswork.

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from records*

Modern high-compliance, light tracking cartridges (Shure M3D compliance is  $4.0 \times 10^{-6}$  cm/dyne; 3 gm. tracking) require arm balance of a high order in *all* planes to deliver ALL the sound, undistorted. The Shure arm pivots on drag-free precision bearings. Precision adjustments assure optimum suspension and permanent balance, regardless of cartridge characteristics.

*new simplicity  
in installation  
and operation*

Installs completely from top side of motorboard. Special cable and plug assembly eliminates hum problem, speeds up and simplifies installation. Eliminates soldering. All you do is plug in one end of cable to tone arm, the other end to amplifier. Lock-on heads are instantly interchangeable. Direct-reading stylus force gauge with instant disconnect, and "micrometer" counterweight assembly permit visual static balance checks.

... an incomparable combination when used with

**SHURE**

*Stereo Dynamic*  
PHONO CARTRIDGES

Overwhelming first choice of the critics. Painstakingly tested, proved, perfected—these superb Shure Stereo Dynamic moving-magnet cartridges are designed specifically to satisfy the critical ear of the most discriminating music lover... the most exacting audiophile. They separate disc stereo sound channels with incisive clarity. They are singularly smooth throughout the normally audible spectrum... and they are superior to other separate stereo cartridges in the re-creation of clean lows; true-to-performance mid-ranges and brilliant highs. Completely compatible.



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TONE ARM M236, for 16" records.....	\$31.95 net
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M236-3 (with M3D cartridge installed).....	\$76.95 net
M3D Professional Cartridge..	\$45.00 net
M7D Custom Cartridge..	\$24.00 net

Literature available / SHURE BROTHERS, INC., 222 HARTREY AVENUE, EVANSTON, ILLINOIS

CIRCLE 81 ON READER-SERVICE CARD





## General Electric VR-22 Stereo Cartridge—Superior in the four vital areas

Stop to think for a moment of all the jobs required of a stereo cartridge: It must track, with utmost precision, in not one but two directions. It must separate the two stereo channels inscribed in a single record groove. It must perform smoothly in mid-range and at both ends of the audible frequency spectrum. And it must do all these things without producing noticeable hum or noise. Only a fantastically sensitive and precise instrument like the General Electric VR-22 can do all these jobs successfully.

General Electric's VR-22 is superior in the four vital areas of stereo cartridge performance: (1) **Compliance**—It tracks precisely, without the least trace of stiffness. (2) **Channel separation**—Up

to 28 db for maximum stereo effect. (3) **Response**—Smooth and flat for superior sound from 20 to 20,000 cycles (VR-22-5), 20 to 17,000 cycles (VR-22-7). (4) **Freedom from hum**—The VR-22 is triple-shielded against stray currents.

VR-22-5 with .5 mil diamond stylus for professional quality tone arms, \$27.95\*. VR-22-7 with .7 mil diamond stylus for professional arms and record changers, \$24.95\*. Both are excellent for monophonic records, too. TM-2G Tone Arm—designed for use with General Electric stereo cartridges as an integrated pickup system, \$29.95\*.



General Electric Co., Audio Products Section, Decatur, Illinois

\*Manufacturer's suggested resale prices.



# GENERAL ELECTRIC

CIRCLE 45 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



*beauty and quality go hand in hand with*

# BOGEN-PRESTO

## HIGH FIDELITY COMPONENTS



In the more than 25 years devoted exclusively to sound, Bogen-Presto has amassed a great wealth of experience—specialized skills representing more than 1 million engineering man hours spent in developing better ways to create better sound.

Quality, at Bogen-Presto, has become a tradition—a driving force that sets the pace for every operation, and prescribes the standards below which no equipment performance is deemed acceptable. Bogen-Presto equipment is built for service—years and years of trouble-free performance. Only the finest, pre-tested component parts are used. And each unit is conceived, designed, engineered and produced under the same roof, by the same people with the same skills, the same awareness of company standards, and the same

devotion to quality. You can even detect it in the freshness of styling—in the appearance that fairly breathes quality—and in the decorous restraint which commends it to a place in your home.

It is also exemplified in the manner in which the specifications are presented. Note that the information given is complete with all qualifying data. Amplifier power ratings, for example, are for music waveforms in accordance with accepted IHFM procedure, and distortion percentages are, in each case, specified for full, rated output. FM tuner sensitivity figures are for 20 db of quieting at 75 ohms. There are no ambiguities—no significant omissions obscured by superlatives and by lengthy listings of obvious, commonplace features, which all equipment must necessarily possess.



SRB40



SRB20

### MONO-STEREO FM-AM RECEIVERS

The **MODEL SRB40** with its 40-watt output (20 watts per channel) was designed to meet the power requirements suggested for the new-type, low-efficiency loudspeakers. Total harmonic distortion is less than 1% (actually only 0.6% with magnetic cartridge). Frequency response extends from 20 to 20,000 cycles,  $\pm 1$  db. At 40 watts it can handle a pair of the most inefficient of these speaker systems . . . with power to spare.

The  $1\mu\text{V}$  sensitivity of the FM section insures lowest possible distortion, and noise-free reception—even in weak signal areas. Other features which attest to the overall quality of the SRB40 include: AFC and AGC on FM, AVC on AM, two IF stages in the AM circuit, special recorder outputs, stereo multiplex adaptability, and the use of pure, filtered, hum-free dc on low-level tube heaters. Built-in FM and AM antennas are provided.

The SRB40 is fully equipped with inputs and controls to meet the functional demands of all available program sources — including special tape-head inputs with equalization. Model SRB40.....**\$269.50**  
Walnut Cabinet as shown (Model WE-3) ..... **27.50**  
Metal Enclosure and Legs (Model END-1) ..... **9.50**

The **MODEL SRB20** is identical to the SRB40 in front-end circuitry and design. Every feature, facility and specification attributed to the SRB40 applies to the SRB20 . . . except for power output. The SRB20 with its 20 watts (10 watts per channel) delivers more than enough power to drive any system of loudspeakers intended for use in the home—including most low-efficiency types.

Model SRB20 .....**\$219.50**  
Metal Enclosure and Legs, as shown (Model ENB-1) ..... **8.50**  
Walnut Cabinet (Model WE-3) ..... **27.75**

The **MODEL RC412** is an instrument to command respect at any price. The need for power in excess of its total 12-watt output is rarely necessary where normally efficient loudspeakers are used. Within its power capabilities, the RC412 offers attractive economy without compromise in quality.

It is significant to note that even in the low cost RC412, the distortion is less than 1%; that its response from 30 to 15,000 cycles covers the full range of audibility,  $\pm 1$  db; and that it has  $1\mu\text{V}$  FM sensitivity, two IF stages in the AM circuit, AFC and AGC on FM, AVC on AM, stereo multiplex adaptability, special recorder outputs, and hum-free dc on the low-level tube heaters. Model RC412.....**\$179.50**  
Metal Enclosure and Legs, as shown (Model ENC-1) ..... **8.50**  
Walnut Cabinet (Model WE-3) ..... **27.75**







ST662 in gold or grey



ST442 in gold or grey

## MONO-STEREO AM-FM TUNERS

The **MODEL ST662** can be counted upon to give day-in, day-out reliable reception despite weak stations, crowded wavebands and local interference. With FM sensitivity better than  $0.8\mu\text{V}$ , antenna considerations become relatively unimportant and noise-free reception becomes possible even in weakest signal areas. And in the AM circuit, the use of an RF stage and two IF stages results in a terminal sensitivity of better than  $3\mu\text{V}$  per meter for 20 db signal-to-noise ratio.

The FM section employs a dual limiter-discriminator circuit, and automatically provides partial interchannel hush, thus retaining tuning presence. Separate tuning indicators are used for FM and AM. And there is AFC and AGC on FM as well as AVC on AM. Flat to  $\pm 0.5$  db from 20 to 18,000 cycles, the ST662 exceeds the broadcast bandwidth capabilities of FM stations. Low impedance cathode-followers permit long amplifier connecting cables without frequency discrimination. There is also provision for adapting to stereo multiplex. Model ST662 in gold or grey.....\$189.50

The **MODEL ST442** is a sensitive, all-around instrument whose performance and smart styling would be hard to equal in any comparably priced tuner. Apartment-house reception, fringe area reception—the ST442 with its  $1\mu\text{V}$  sensitivity, takes them in its stride—and performs with a reliability that bespeaks the good design and quality which have gone into making it an outstanding value.

Except for a single limiter-discriminator FM circuit and a tuning meter instead of two indicators, the ST442 and ST662 are identical in all other essential features: AM sensitivity, AFC, AGC and AVC, low impedance cathode-followers, stereo multiplex adaptability, and frequency response. Model ST442 in gold or grey.....\$149.50

Metal Enclosure and Legs for either ST662 or ST442	
as shown with ST662 (Model BEG) .....	7.50
Walnut Cabinet for either ST662 or ST442	
as shown with ST442 (Model WE-2) .....	23.50



DB230A in gold or grey



DB212 in gold or grey

## MONO-STEREO AMPLIFIERS

The **MODEL DB230A** with less than 1% distortion at 60 watts (30 watts per channel) and  $\pm 0.5$  db response from 20 to 20,000 cycles, delivers more full-range distortion-free power than is needed for the most inefficient speaker systems.

Several additional design features deserve attention: controlled positive feedback for optimum damping and stability; phono-mix switch for adapting stereo cartridges to mono records; switched hi-lo cut-off filters; volume plus loudness controls; separate recorder outputs; speaker phasing switch; and inputs for every program source, including equalized tape-head inputs. Uses pure full-wave-rectified dc on low-level filaments. DB 230A in gold or grey .....\$189.50  
Metal Enclosure and Legs, as shown (Model CEG) ..... 8.00  
Walnut Cabinet (Model WE-1) ..... 24.75

The **MODEL DB212** is a 24-watt amplifier with unique capabilities. As a conventional, self-contained stereo amplifier it delivers 12 watts per channel. With one preamplifier channel driving both amplifiers, it serves as a single monophonic 24-watt amplifier. In addition, the output of the remaining or second channel preamp can be used to drive an external amplifier—for higher powered stereo or independent remote mono applications.

Frequency response is 20 to 20,000 cycles  $\pm 1$  db; distortion, less than 1%. Also included: equalized tape-head inputs, switched hi-lo filters, separate recorder outputs, speaker phasing switch, and dc on low-level filaments. Model DB212 in gold or grey .....\$119.95  
Walnut Cabinet as shown (Model WE-2) ..... 23.50  
Metal Enclosure and Legs (BEG) ..... 7.50

## MONO-STEREO CONTROL CENTER

The **MODEL PR2** is the most practical, versatile control center ever designed for use in the home. Despite its 15 inputs, 14 separate controls, and indicator lights for each mode and function in use, its appearance is clean and uncluttered—worthy of a place in any home.

Among its many facilities: special phono-mix switch, phasing switch, loudness and volume controls, equalized tape-head inputs, separate recorder outputs, switched hi-lo cut-off filters, stereo multiplex adaptability, cathode-followers, and pure, full-wave-rectified dc on all filaments. Frequency response: 20 to 20,000 cycles,  $\pm 1$  db; distortion, less than 0.4%. As much as 10 volts signal output available.

Model PR2 in gold or grey \$99.50; Metal Enclosure and Legs as shown (Model DEG) \$7.50



PR2 in gold or grey

See and hear these magnificent Bogen-Presto components at your high fidelity dealer. For special details not covered, write to:

**BOGEN-PRESTO**



BOGEN-PRESTO

PARAMUS, NEW JERSEY

A DIVISION OF THE SIEGLER CORPORATION





*now...a single-cabinet speaker system  
that provides full, dimensional stereo performance  
no matter where you stand or sit in the room!*

# SPACIAL FIDELITY<sup>by</sup> RFL

*a totally new concept in mono-stereo speaker design*

Spacial Fidelity offers you an entirely new listening experience. It's like having the concert or the opera or the musical performed in your own home. For, just as the environmental surroundings of the concert hall or the theatre give the original performance its character of breadth and dimension, so too, Spacial Fidelity utilizes the walls, the ceiling, the furnishings—literally the entire room—and makes them part of the music reproducing system to achieve the same sense of spaciousness and dimension.

The effect is totally unlike anything you've ever heard in mono or stereo—totally unlike anything you've learned to expect when listening to loudspeakers. You hear music—wherever you stand or sit. And you're hardly even aware of the presence of a loudspeaker in the room. The 'hole-in-the-middle'—characteristic of separate-cabinet stereo speaker systems which beam the sound directly at you—just doesn't exist. Spacial Fidelity achieves this unusual result through the unique design and geometry of the enclosure, and by the precise positioning of the speaker components in the side walls of the cabinet.

Even your present monophonic system played through a Spacial Fidelity speaker system will sound better—better than you ever imagined possible. And if, at some later date, you decide to convert to stereo, no additional speakers will be required. Your Spacial Fidelity speaker system is already complete—ready to bring you full, dimensional stereo... at its ultimate best.

**THE PROVINCIAL** (shown in main illustration) is part of the deluxe series, an example of Spacial Fidelity at its finest, in per-

formance and in cabinetry. The console is a Petruccelli original, expertly hand-crafted and superbly finished. It is available in platinum-walnut or fruitwood, at \$795. Other Petruccelli originals in this series are: the stately mahogany **CLASSIC**, at \$765, and the modern **CONTEMPORARY**, at \$735. The authentic **COLONIAL** is a Drake-Smith creation in solid pine, at \$630.

**THE SUBURBAN** is an intermediate model of somewhat smaller proportions. Its lowboy styling and clean, sharp lines exemplify today's modern living. Measures: 35 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 27 $\frac{1}{8}$ " x 15 $\frac{1}{8}$ ". Available in walnut or brown mahogany at \$375.

**THE METROPOLITAN** is ideal for small rooms, or even larger rooms where space is at a premium. It may be wall-mounted, set on a book-shelf or fitted with legs as a lowboy. Measures: 39" x 12 $\frac{1}{8}$ " x 11 $\frac{1}{8}$ ". Available in walnut or two-tone at \$225. Write for complete details and dealer information.



THE SUBURBAN



THE METROPOLITAN

® Radio Frequency Laboratories, Inc. Audio Products Division Boonton, N. J. CIRCLE 73 ON READER-SERVICE CARD





# trading?

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\*See HIGH FIDELITY Magazine,  
May 1959, page 39

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## Grass-Roots Opera

*Everything's up-to-date in Kansas City.*

IT WAS a lively time for opera in the day and a half which preceded the Metropolitan's regional auditions finals this spring. The National Opera Association and the Central Opera Service, each founded a few years ago to promote opera throughout the whole country, joined forces at a conference in New York to sponsor a series of discussions and some impromptu performances under the general heading of "Opera Tomorrow." As it turned out, the various facets of opera today were so numerous and engrossing that tomorrow slipped a bit into the background, but no one attending the conference would doubt that, whatever the nature of future developments of opera in this country, there is at least a future.

Two aspects of the American scene were uppermost on the agenda: the production of opera outside the New York-Chicago-San Francisco circuit, and American composers' views on what American opera *is*—or ought to be. Those concerned with one or the other of these matters, though they share some ultimate goals, encountered each other head-on for a moment when Lehman Engel, conductor of some 140 Broadway shows, rose midway in the proceedings to say that Americans don't really *like* opera: the language barrier is too difficult; plots are not geared to a movie-going, TV-watching public; the general run of productions is often totally unamusing to that sorely tried being, the tired businessman. Before the mutter of protest from the floor could gather strength, Mr. Engel forged ahead to make some cogent points in support of a truly American brand of musical entertainment (though where he would draw the line between a "musical" and an opera remained unclear). Our musical style must grow out of our land, Mr. Engel maintained; and just as Mozart and Bizet used popular dances, our composers should draw on American folk music and popular tunes. The libretto, he continued, must be "literate, reasonable, and workable," based on the conviction that opera is, first and foremost, theatre and therefore dramatic. In the best tradition of the theatre, the story must involve us, the audience, and in order to do so it must derive from our own background. Mr. Engel spoke persuasively, but we still have some question as to whether the tastes of the tired businessman are really the composer's best criteria.

The question of whether or not Americans really like opera was illuminated in a rather paradoxical manner by one of the liveliest panels featured at the conference, that concerned with civic opera. The competence and enthusiasm of the panel members made it clear that local productions in Flint, Mich.,

Boston, Mass., Kansas City, Mo., and Binghampton, N. Y., at least, are in the very best of hands, though all these cities share one persistent problem—which is, of course, money. The discussion led us to infer that there is more of this essential available in Boston, but when it comes to raising funds against odds, we will bet on Russell Paterson of the Kansas City Lyric Theater.

Mr. Paterson, who holds two MAs in music and studied conducting in Germany under a Fulbright fellowship, set out two seasons ago to sell opera to Kansas City. His aim, as he puts it, was to provide a minor league which would enable singers to bridge the gap between finishing their formal training and tackling a career in the major big-city companies. The opera idea is "sold" to local businessmen (Mr. Paterson's choice of the verb was quite deliberate) as a smart investment, and an Evening at the Opera can be sponsored by any firm buying out the house (750 seats) for one night's performance. The firm distributes the tickets gratis to customers and clients, and the Lyric Theater handles the publicity, with emphasis on the sponsor's name, through radio, TV, Kiwanis Club announcements, and the entertainment pages (rather than the more forbidding music section) of the newspapers. A four-week season of twenty performances can yield a possible \$60,000, which is enough to cover expenses; and the Theater, though in the red for its first two seasons, expects to break even soon.

A genuine accomplishment, and one's respect for Mr. Paterson's enterprise is great. Here is proof that opera can be made to succeed outside so-called centers of culture. And yet we received the uncomfortable impression—and this is the paradox—that even Kansas City, on the verge of supporting its own company, is suspicious of the very word "opera," and that Mr. Paterson, selling opera to business firms as a clever publicity maneuver, may be doing a very good job of candy-coating a pill that the town isn't sure it really wants to swallow. Certainly, as Lehman Engel pointed out, this country is far away from the Venice which once supported five hundred opera houses at one time to meet the public demand.

But hard-sell opera, surely, is better than no opera at all. If in a few years Kansas City finds itself as fond of the music in opera as of the publicity possibilities, Mr. Paterson and his colleagues will have achieved a major break through. Meanwhile, thanks are owing to COS and NOA for a provocative conference and for the support they are offering to all potential Kansas City's.

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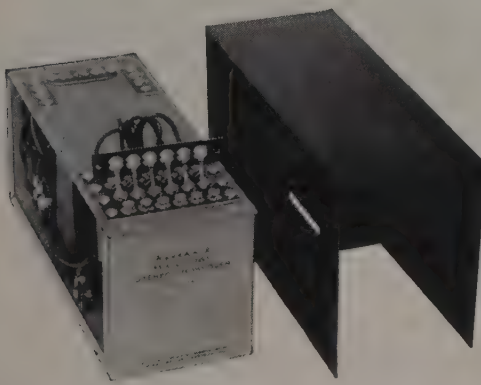
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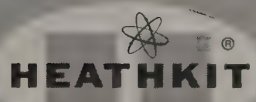
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## Stereo Without Gigantism

NOT VERY LONG AGO I had a visit from a friend of mine, a Washington writer who has compiled and edited several books on music, as well as a humor anthology. He got out of his low red car and almost immediately we had an argument, standing in the sunny hickory grove that would be our lawn if we had a lawn. The argument, a cordial one, was about stereo. I began losing it straightaway (my friend writes political speeches), so I sneakily decided to turn over my side of it to nine better men. This required an oblique reference to cool, wet refreshments, but all is fair in arguments about stereo. In reasonably short order my friend was in the house and in the right chair. Then I could play my trump card, which was London CS 6051.

Now I must explain that, although this gentleman's musical tastes are catholic, he takes a special delight in classical chamber music. There lay the germ of our dispute. He had concluded that stereo could do nothing for him. He drives a sports car and he sometimes plays table tennis, but he stoutly maintained that he didn't want to *hear* either of these amenities sounding out of loudspeakers in his living room. And furthermore, he added, he did not particularly care for the *1812* Overture, even when it's embellished with real eight-inch artillery.

Against this conviction, or perhaps I should say misconception (of a sort strongly fostered by stereo promotion) I could do little by myself, which is why I summoned help. My allies were nine Austrians. One was named Franz Peter Schubert, and the others call themselves collectively the Vienna Octet. My friend lost his argument in the first sixty seconds, an outcome that plainly pleased him very much. As the last exultant tutti died out, he arose to leave, but before doing so he walked over to the corner between the two speakers and solemnly shook hands with the empty air. "I just wanted to offer my congratulations to the gentlemen of the Octet," he said.

Thus a conversion was accomplished. I mean the important conversion, the one that happens between the ears. The rest will be slower: my friend, like many another fidelitarian, has such a good monophonic sound system that doubling it up is bound to be expensive

and should be approached with caution. But what he needed to be shown was that stereo really does best *just what he would have hoped it would do best*. It brings most vividly into the living room music that was, in effect, written for living rooms. Or sometimes for chapels.

By this I do not mean I have anything against the Berlioz *Requiem* or the Queen's Birthday Salute, fired off in Hyde Park. And stereo does give these things a certain amplitude, useful when one wishes to astound party guests. I will say, however, not in the least apologetically, that once a year is often enough, for me, to hear four brass choirs proclaiming a nineteenth-century Doomsday, and that never do I really hope to have horse artillery cantering across our hooked rug. Furthermore, my room wasn't made to contain these things, and they sound, always, just a little phony.

Now I'll tell you what doesn't sound phony, and what I do often really want to hear, when I am in a nighttime hearing mood. To wit: Wilhelm Backhaus rippling out the Haydn E minor Sonata, so convincingly that the big, black Bechstein is almost visible; Eileen Farrell singing *My Heart Ever Faithful* with the wonderful instrumentalists of the Bach Aria Group behind her; Clifford Curzon and his Viennese friends casting for Schubert's deathless Trout; the Hollywood Quartet exploring the magic wilderness that Villa Lobos lived in; the four Russians who are called Budapest analyzing the young Beethoven of Opus 18.

These things stereo can bring to your leisure hours in full life size; illusion is almost needless. Lately I heard the Juilliard Quartet in their own college music theatre. And a day later I listened to them playing *Death and the Maiden* in my living room. I speak nothing but sober truth when I say that they sounded bigger and truer from my corner than they did from the stage. Chamber music seems to have been made for stereo, and it is stereo's safest buy. There is no mystery about this. Recording a piano or a quartet in stereo, one can place microphones just about where the listener's loudspeakers are going to be, with an easy and compelling realism as an almost automatic result. Which is a happy gathering of circumstances: sound is important, but the finest of all sound is music.

JOHN M. CONLY

AS THE EDITORS SEE IT





by IGOR STRAVINSKY

# Firebird's First Flight

Tamara Karsavina and Adolphe Bolm



**The world's greatest living composer reminisces frankly about the work that made the first big noise in his career, just fifty years ago this month.**

I HAD already begun to think about the *Firebird* when I returned to St. Petersburg from Oustiloug,<sup>1</sup> in the fall of 1909, though I was not yet certain of the commission (which, in fact, did not come until December, more than a month after I had begun to compose; I remember the day Diaghilev telephoned me to say go ahead, and my telling him I already had). Early in November I moved from St. Petersburg to a *dacha* belonging to the Rimsky-Korsakov family, about seventy miles southeast of the city. I went there for a vacation, a rest in birch forests and snow-fresh air, but instead began to work on the

*Firebird*. Andrei Rimsky-Korsakov [son of the composer] was with me at the time, as he often was during the following months; because of this, the *Firebird* is dedicated to him. The Introduction up to the bassoon and clarinet figure at bar six was composed in the country, as well as notations for later parts. I returned to St. Petersburg in December and remained there until, in March, I had finished the composition. The orchestra score was ready a month later, and the complete music mailed to Paris by mid-April. (The score is dated May 18, but by that time I was merely retouching details.)

The *Firebird* did not attract me as a subject. Like all "story" ballets, it demanded "descriptive" music of a kind I did not want to write. I had not yet proved myself as a composer, had not earned the right to criticize the aesthetics of my collaborators; but I did criticize them, and arrogantly, though perhaps my *age* (I was only twenty-seven) was more arrogant than I was. Above all I could not abide the assumption that my music would be imitation Rimsky-Korsakov, especially since

<sup>1</sup> Oustiloug—"Ousti" means "mouth"—is a village at the confluence of the Louga and the Bug. My father-in-law, Gabriel Nossenko, a Doctor, had purchased an estate of several thousand hectares there in the 1890s, and because of the salubrious climate, the forests, rivers, and wheat fields, I spent at least a part of every spring or summer there from 1905–1914. Our house opened directly on the Louga, for which reason, probably, I became a boating "buff," though, curiously, I did not learn to swim. The Oustiloug village population of about 3,000 was entirely Jewish—a Rabbinical community out of Chagall or Isaac Babel; the villagers were very cozy and affectionate to me. We journeyed to Oustiloug from St. Petersburg by train, stopping first at Brest-Litovsk, and another hundred and forty versts further south, at Kovel, where there we changed to a smaller line for Vladimir-Volynsk. Here we were obliged to take horse carriages for the remaining twelve versts to Oustiloug, a treacherous ride due to an extremely sandy road—I was once caught in it in an automobile.



by this time I was in such revolt against poor Rimsky. If I say I was not anxious to fulfill the commission, however, I know that, in truth, my reservations about the subject were partly advance defense for my not being sure I could. But Diaghilev's diplomacy arranged all. He came to see me one day, with Fokine, Nijinsky Bakst, and Benois, and when the five of them had proclaimed their belief in my talent, I began to believe too, and accepted.

Fokine is credited as the librettist of the *Firebird*, but I remember that all of us, and especially Bakst, who was Diaghilev's principal adviser, contributed ideas to the plan of the scenario; I should also add that Bakst was as much responsible for the costumes as Golovine.<sup>2</sup> My own "collaboration" with Fokine means nothing more than that we studied the libretto together, episode by episode, until I knew the exact measurements required of the music. In spite of Fokine's wearying homiletics, delivered at each meeting, on the role of music as an *accompaniment* to dance, he taught me much, and I have worked with choreographers somewhat in the same way ever since. I like exact requirements.

I was flattered, of course, at the promise of a performance of my music in Paris, and my excitement on arriving in that city, from Oustiloug, towards the end of May, could hardly have been greater. These ardors were somewhat cooled, however, at the first full rehearsal. The words "For Russian Export" seemed to be stamped everywhere, both on the stage and in the music. The mimic scenes were especially obvious in this sense, but I could say nothing about them as they were what Fokine liked best. I was also deflated to discover that not all of my musical remarks were held to be oracular, and Pierné, the conductor, disagreed with me once in front of the whole orchestra. I had written "non crescendo," a precaution common enough in the music of the last fifty years, but Pierné said, "Young man, if you do not want a crescendo, then do not write anything."

The first-night audience glittered indeed, but the fact that it was heavily perfumed is more vivid in my memory; the grayly elegant London audience, when I came to know it later, seemed almost deodorized by comparison. I sat in Diaghilev's box where, at intermissions, artists, dowagers, aged Egerias of the Ballet, "intellectuals," balletomanes, appeared. I met for the first time Proust, Giraudoux, Paul Morand, Alexis

St. Leger, Claudel (with whom, years later, I nearly collaborated on a musical treatment of the Book of Tobit) at the *Firebird*, though I cannot remember whether at the premiere or at subsequent performances. At one of the latter I also met Sarah Bernhardt. She was thickly veiled, sitting in a wheel chair in her private box, and seemed terribly apprehensive lest anyone should recognize her.<sup>3</sup> After a month of such society I was happy to retire to a sleepy village in Brittany.

A moment of unexpected comedy occurred near the beginning of the performance. Diaghilev had had the idea that a procession of real horses should march on stage—in step with, to be exact, the last six eighth-notes of bar eight. The poor animals did enter on cue all right, but they began to neigh and whinny, and one of them, a better critic than an actor, left a malodorous calling card. The audience laughed, and Diaghilev decided not to risk a repetition in future performances—that he could have tried it even once seems incredible to me now—but the incident was forgotten in the general acclaim for the new ballet afterwards.

I was called to the stage to bow at the conclusion, and was recalled several times. I was still on stage when the final curtain had come down, and I saw Diaghilev coming towards me, and a dark man with a double forehead, whom he introduced as Claude Debussy. The great composer spoke kindly about the music, ending his words with an invitation to dine with him. Some years later, when we were sitting together in his box at a performance of *Pelléas*, I asked him what he really thought of the

<sup>2</sup> I also knew Réjane (speaking of actresses) and can remember a dinner with her at the Chapon Fin in Bordeaux in 1915. She was still a beauty then, though fifty-eight years old.



*The Wedding Scene, from the premiere of the Firebird, Paris 1910.*

<sup>3</sup> Golovine's décors were Persian in style: the stage looked like a Persian carpet. They were unfortunately lost or destroyed during the 1914-1918 War.



*Firebird*. He said, “*Que voulez-vous, il fallait bien commencer par quelque chose.*” Honest but not extremely flattering. Yet shortly after the *Firebird* premiere he gave me his well-known photo (in profile) with a dedication “à Igor Stravinsky en toute sympathie artistique.” I was not so honest about the work we were then hearing. I thought *Pelléas* a great bore as a whole, and in spite of many wonderful pages.

Ravel, who liked the *Firebird*, though less than *Petrushka* or *Le Sacre*, explained its success to me as having been paved, in part, by the musical dullness of Diaghilev's last new production, *Pavillon d'Armide* (Benois-Tcherepnine). The Parisian audience wanted a taste of *avant-garde*, Ravel said, and the *Firebird* was, according to Ravel, just that. To this explanation I would add that the *Firebird* belongs to the styles of its time, and that while it is more vigorous than most of the “composed” folk music of the period, it is also not too original—all good conditions for a success. The success was not only Parisian, however. When I had selected a suite of the best numbers, and when this suite became available, it was played all over Europe (except in Russia; at least, I never heard it there, or for that matter, any of my music after *Fireworks*).

Though the orchestral body of the *Firebird* was wastefully large, I was more proud of some of the orchestration than of the music itself. The trombone glissandi in the Kastchei scene produced the biggest sensation with the audience, of course, but this effect was not original with me—Rimsky had used trombone slides, I

think in *Mlada*, and Schoenberg in his tone poem *Pelleas und Melisande*, to cite earlier but less popular examples. For me the most striking effect in the *Firebird* was the natural-harmonic string glissando which the bass chord touches off like a Catherine's wheel. I was delighted to have discovered this, and I remember my excitement in demonstrating it to Rimsky's violinist and cellist sons. I remember, too, Richard Strauss's astonishment when he heard it two years later in Berlin.

But how am I to talk like a “confessing author” about the *Firebird* when my feelings towards it are almost purely those of a critic? I was criticizing it even when I was composing it. The Mendelssohnian Scherzo (“The Princess and the Golden Apples”), for instance, failed completely to satisfy me. (I am never ultimately satisfied with anything I write, but this feeling was stronger than that.) I tried again and again, but I could do no better, and an awkward orchestral handicap, though I cannot say exactly what it is, remains in this piece. I have already criticized the *Firebird* twice, however, in my revised versions of 1919 and 1945, and these direct musical criticisms are stronger than words.

Am I too critical? Does more real musical invention exist in the *Firebird* than I am able (or willing) to see? I would think were the case. The few scraps of counterpoint that can be found in it—in the Kastchei scene, for example—are derived from chord tones, and this is not real counterpoint. If there is an interesting construction in the *Firebird*, it will be found in the treatment of intervals, the major and minor thirds in the *Berceuse*, in the Introduction, and in Kastchei. When, one day in the future, some poor doctoral candidate sifts my early works for their “serial tendencies,” this sort of thing will, I suppose, rate as an *Ur*-example. Rhythmically, too, the Finale might be cited as the first appearance in my music of metrical irregularity (the 7/4 bars subdivided into 1, 2, 3; 1, 2; 1, 2| 1, 2; 1, 2; 1, 2, 3| etc.). But that is all.

The rest of my *Firebird* history is uneventful. I sold the manuscript in 1919 to one Jean Bartoloni, a wealthy and generous Monte Carlo croupier who lived in retirement in Geneva. He not only bought my *Firebird* manuscript and presented it to the Geneva Conservatory, but gave a large sum of money to a publishing house for the purchase of the music I composed during the war years (*Noces*, *Renard*, and *Histoire du Soldat* included). The Diaghilev revival of 1927, on a double bill with my *Oedipus Rex* and with new décors and costumes by Gontcharova, pleased me less than the original production, and about subsequent productions I have already remarked elsewhere. I should add that the *Firebird* has been a mainstay in my life as a conductor. I made my conducting debut with it (the complete ballet) in 1915 at a Red Cross benefit in Paris, and since then I have performed it nearly a thousand times, though ten thousand would not erase the memory of the terror I suffered that first time.

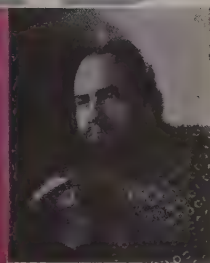


Stravinsky in 1911, photographed by Ravel on the balcony of the latter's avenue Carnot apartment.



# *The Life and Death of*

# LEONARD WARREN



**An account of America's most notable baritone voice — how it  
grew and when it stopped — and of the man behind it.**

---

by ALAN WAGNER

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THE EVENT was so ultradramatic that it hardly seems real to me, even in retrospect.

On the evening of Friday, March 4, the Metropolitan Opera House was jammed for the return of Renata Tebaldi as Leonora in Verdi's *La Forza del destino*. I myself was at the Met that night mainly to hear Leonard Warren, with whom I had had a long talk only a few days earlier, preparatory to writing an article about him for *HIGH FIDELITY*. In Act II, Warren as Don Carlo was alone on stage. His resplendent singing of the aria "*Urna fatale del mio destino*" had been enthusiastically applauded, and now the scene was proceeding to its imminent curtain. A Surgeon entered, reporting that the wounded Don Alvaro would live. "*E salvo!*" Warren echoed, "*è salvo! O gioia!*" and he took a quick step to his left. Suddenly, he stumbled and fell heavily headlong. The orchestra stopped playing and a bleak silence deepened in the auditorium. The prostrate figure on stage never moved. Amid the now ominous quiet, with the echoes of applause and music still rich in the air, in costume and in performance, at the height of his thundering career, Leonard Warren died.

Warren is necessarily a legend now, perhaps best so. There is no question but that he was at his death a towering performer, probably the best baritone America has produced, and one of the finest Verdi artists of his era. Only a few days before that last performance he had scored a major success in the title role of a new production of *Simon Boccanegra*, a fitting enough climax to two decades of growing triumphs in the touchstones of the Verdi repertoire. He needs no panegyric; as an artist, his image is secure.

The complexities and the contradictions of the personality behind the artist, however, remain fascinating. The public almost invariably thought of Warren as a plain, rather dull chap, devoid of temperament and gentle of soul, the happy possessor of a noble voice and the skill to use it musically. Somehow, people seemed to think, anybody that round could hardly be anything but jolly and calm. Yet, in fact, the man seethed. In rehearsals he stood revealed to his colleagues as the tyrant, the shouter, the veritable male prima donna. Only recently he was involved in a contretemps with a full orchestra, necessitating his apology before the rehearsal could continue. (He had, by that time, made his point.) On the West Coast a few seasons ago he disrupted a run-through of *Falstaff* when he emerged enraged from the hamper in which he was supposed to be hiding, calling fiercely on

## A Selective List of Warren Performances on Discs

**Leoncavallo:** *Pagliacci*. De los Angeles, Bjoerling, Merrill. RCA Victor LM 6106. Probably the best sung Tonio on records.

**Ponchielli:** *La Gioconda*. Milanov, Di Stefano, Elias. RCA Victor LM 6139. (Excerpts on RCA Victor LM 2249.) As evil a Barnaba as there is. Warren's performance is the real distinction of this release.

**Puccini:** *Tosca*. Milanov, Bjoerling. RCA Victor LM 6052. Suave, sonorous, unctuous villainy.

**Verdi:** *Aida*. Milanov, Bjoerling, Barbieri, Christoff. RCA Victor LM 6122. (Excerpts on RCA Victor LM 2046.) Not Warren's best role, but handsomely sung nonetheless.

**Verdi:** Arias. RCA Victor LM 1932. Excellent sampler of Warren's masterful way with Verdi showpieces.

**Verdi:** *Macbeth*. Rysanek, Hines. RCA Victor LM 6147. A towering achievement in the title role.

**Verdi:** *Rigoletto*. RCA Victor LM 6021. (Excerpts on RCA Victor LM 1104.) Peerce, Berger. Warren was better than this in later years, but nonetheless a treasurable performance.

**Verdi:** *Rigoletto*, Act IV. RCA Victor LM 6041. Part of "Verdi and Toscanini" album. Milanov is Warren's Gilda in an unforgettable pulse-pounding wartime performance.

**Verdi:** *La Traviata*. Carteri, Valletti. RCA Victor LM 6040. (Excerpts on RCA Victor LM 2044.) Generally best available *Traviata*.

**Verdi:** *Il Trovatore*. Milanov, Bjoerling, Barbieri. RCA Victor LM 6008. (Excerpts on RCA Victor LM 1827.) Some distinguished vocalism here, not the least being Warren's.

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"A Leonard Warren Memorial Album." RCA Victor LM 2453. A recently released miscellany of some of the baritone's outstanding performances.

"Sea Chanties." RCA Victor LM 1168. Robust renditions for those whose tastes lie in this direction.

Heaven to witness the shameful way in which his basket was being hidden by another performer, a lady of no small temper herself. Warren railed at costumers, conductors, singers, stage crews, and managers alike, in furies that ranged from livid to Olympian.

Even more unsettling than his anger, perhaps, could be his calculated stubbornness. Twenty years of leading roles served to strengthen his conviction that Warren was right, and he became in effect a feudal lord, reigning over much of the Met's Italian wing with, at best, an air of *noblesse oblige* towards most of his confreres. He was known on more than one occasion to ever so quietly twist a soprano's arm until she stopped fluttering a handkerchief distractingly during a duet, all without missing a single nuance of the music himself. He was privy to every attention-getting dodge. This past season he quite effectively directed eyes away from a young soprano's performance during Act II of *La Traviata* by deliberately and adroitly maneuvering her into a game of Alfonse and Gaston as she tried to use the set's short staircase for dramatic effect. And when it came to curtain calls the man could be a terror. Nobody, but *nobody*, took a solo curtain call after he did if he could possibly help it, and many were the sopranos who found the carefully planned effect of thrown flowers materially diminished by Warren's expert timing in sweeping them up and presenting them to the lady, thereby focusing attention where he felt it belonged—on himself. Not even the mighty genus Conductor was safe from Warren's cold and insistent righteousness: one distinguished baton wielder even had his white-tied neck grabbed and his head vigorously shaken as though he were a recalcitrant schoolboy.

Warren himself always insisted, though, that there was never anything malicious in all this. "If you are in this crazy business," he told me, "you'd better know all the tricks of the trade, or you're doomed. You learn that if you're not temperamental, you're not normal."

More than simple temperament, however, and more than simple backstage and onstage tactical warfare were, in reality, involved. Warren's determined contrariness had double roots, inextricably interwoven but discernible nonetheless, and they both made him the kind of artist he was. On the one hand, he was almost childlike in his exhibitionism, his need for status, his simple balkiness; on the other, he was a fiercely demanding perfectionist with almost impossibly high standards. The combination was extremely volatile.

In the word "childlike" there is not necessarily an implication of naïveté. It was difficult for anyone to fool Warren, except himself, and he did it constantly. It was evident in scores of habits and events. His diet, for instance: he had convinced himself that he was paying proper respect to his waistline by becoming a yogurt fancier—but he would sprinkle a half-inch of sugar on each serving before eating it. He developed a lifelong hatred of a certain famous Broadway director the Met had hired because he once had worn his hat on stage.



This "lack of respect" enraged Warren, who remained oblivious of the same disrespect implicit in his own draft-shielding but constant beret. His hobbies, from electric trains to boats, all were further indications of this facet of his character.

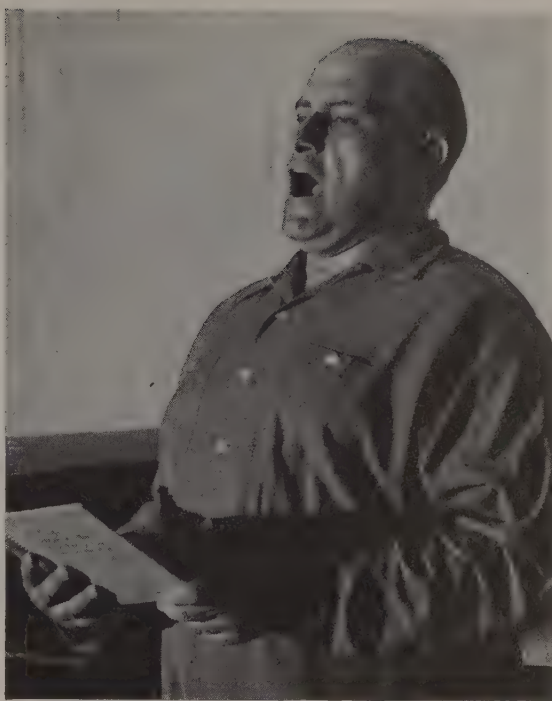
More revealing was his attitude towards his own enormous vocal gifts. Proud of his voice, eager to demonstrate his high C (he had one) at parties, he was happiest when he could amaze his colleagues. At rehearsals of *Macbeth* during the 1958-59 Metropolitan season, for example, he not only sang a climactic high A usually omitted, but began it softly, swelled to a fortissimo, and then diminished to pianissimo again. The conductor and cast were properly flabbergasted. It was an incredible feat for a baritone, but in the opinion of most audiences a good loud high note beats finesse any time, a fact Warren was far too shrewd to ignore. "Of course I'll just sing it fortissimo in performance," he said. "I just wanted to prove I could do it."

"I just wanted to prove" is the key phrase in understanding this aspect of him. It is thrown in high relief by a small thing that happened only last February. Warren was one of many guests at a demonstration of a "compatible" stereo disc system. Everybody was wearing a little lapel card with a space for name and affiliation. His read "Leonard Warren — Metropolitan Opera," and beneath that, in big black letters, he had inked "LEADING BARITONE."

The other half of this dichotomous nature is, of course, the more meaningful in terms of Warren's lasting impact. He was an absolute perfectionist. Once he had conceived of an approach to a role he constantly fought to polish it. Just as feverishly he resisted lethargic tendencies to let productions slip. "Repertory demands discipline," he said; and if nobody else wanted to impose it, he would. If this season's performances of *Macbeth* had a spotlight focused a few inches away from where it had been last year, Warren would stand where it should have been. "Let them move. I'm right, this is the way it should be, and if they'd pay attention and not get sloppy, they'd know it too." Even this was more of an explanation than he usually would bother to give.

So convinced was he of the necessity of his maintaining first-performance standards against the inroads of inertia that he even stormed backstage after a performance of *Tosca* in which he was not involved—he just happened to be in the audience—and inflicted on the Met management a half-hour's fuming tirade against what he considered such degeneration.

Of course, most of this perfectionism was Warren-oriented, but it was no less sincere for that. He honestly believed that as Warren went, so went the production. In a large number of cases his instincts were correct. In San Francisco he once stomped to the footlights and shouted to the eminent conductor in the pit, "Maestro, do you mind if I show you how I sing this?" To which the maestro replied, "Mr. Warren, do you mind if I show you



"... the cleanest and most burning honesty of purpose."

how Verdi wrote it?" And yet, when the dust settled, the two interpretations easily merged into what turned out to be a highly effective moment.

It was not only the music that concerned him, though. He insisted upon and got costume approval, and invariably his approval was given only after seeing all the other costumes to be used. For *Macbeth* he agreed to wear the designated pale colors only when he was assured that Lady Macbeth would be dressed just as wanly. "If she wants a blood-red or a Kelly-green," he said, "let me know. I'll change my mind too."

From costumes it was an easy step to the upstaging contests that marked many of his performances. Of Puccini's *Tosca* he said, "I don't care what the soprano does in Act III. By that time I'm dead. But the first two acts are something different. If she prefers to emote by herself, it's too bad. I'll simply have to force her to act with me." As indicated, he often did just that. One soprano said of him in this opera, "When I've killed Scarpia and come to the line 'before him all Rome trembled,' I have to keep myself from saying 'before him all opera trembles.'"

Scarpia is a case in point in another way too: Warren's fanatical attention to detail in re his own central position got more and more fastidious as time passed. The costume as designed is almost entirely black, but he insisted on having a thin red stripe sewn into his stocking, one nobody out front would ever see, because he felt that Scarpia, a Sicilian, would have some bright color somewhere on him as a badge of authority.

Warren was quite capable of ignoring the larger aspects of his art in quest of

*Continued on page 100*



**If you have a car and a tape recorder, get just one small gadget—  
and you can have whatever music you choose, wherever you are.**

by CHARLES FOWLER

**I**F YOU ENJOY listening to good music at home, why not listen to it as you drive? No, not via your car radio; you know what fare that usually provides. But—and there's no mystery—you can have any type of music you want whenever, and wherever, you want it. The answer is a tape recorder operated from your car battery by a device known as an inverter. The installation can be very simple or stereophonically elaborate; the fidelity, from adequate to exceptional. The program will be whatever you have already dubbed to tape, from records, radio, or any other source. The installation discussed here is typical, with the exception that it features remote control.

To start at the beginning, you need, first, a tape recorder. These fall into two basic categories: those which include a built-in amplifier and loudspeaker and those which do not. Installing one of the latter type in a car can be done, but it is a complicated procedure, and we will consider here only the much more common self-contained recorder. The only other piece of equipment needed to provide your own kind of music as you motor is an inverter. This is a compact, easily installed gadget that translates the 12 volts of direct current used in most cars, and in boats, to the 110-volt alternating current needed by the tape recorder.

Inverters come in several types, depending on application. Choose one specifically designed for operation of tape recorders. Second, they are available in different power ratings, from tiny ones that operate electric shavers to big ones delivering up to 200 watts. The watts required by the recorder is usually indicated on the recorder itself. The inverter chosen should provide a bit of reserve. The recorder in my installation uses 50 watts; the Terado inverter delivers 75 watts continuously.

To connect up, the inverter is plugged into the cigarette lighter on the dashboard and the recorder is connected through its line cord to the inverter. That's all. (The result, I admit, presents complications for heavy smokers; they'll have to quit smoking, use matches, or stop the music when they want to light up.) The music will be whatever has been put on the tape previously; the fidelity will be that of the recorder.

The fidelity can be improved by connecting the recorder to a rear-deck speaker—and it can be made still better by installing a rear-deck speaker system, comprising a woofer, midrange unit, and a tweeter or two. Obviously, the speaker setup can be as fancy as you like, but do be reasonable about it. The noise level inside a moving car is high and the listening area definitely small.



You can have stereo, of course. Two rear-deck speaker systems would do the trick; the recorder would be a stereo model. I refuse, however, to enter into discussions with readers about whether or not channels should be reversed because the sound comes from in back of the listener, and I have no helpful suggestions for people who live in England and operate right-hand-drive cars.

By the way, a tape recorder has many uses in a car, other than providing good music. High-power executives will dictate as they drive. Opera buffs, finding themselves in a sympathetic enclosure that acoustically resembles a bathroom, will try out arias. Legal minds will toy with the idea of holding a microphone up to the motorcycle cop when he asks, "Hey, bub, where's the fire?" and thus catching his twenty-five-dollar words for subsequent dramatic disclosure in the courtroom. And so on. Just use your imagination.

One problem that bothered me was what to do with the tape recorder while the car was parked. If only the recorder could be in the trunk, locked up safely . . . ah, that was the answer. Many dictating machines use tape; all provide remote control so that a secretary can have start-stop-repeat functions at finger- or toe-tip. Few recorders that provide this feature offer anything in the way of fidelity, however. And, until recently, those that have good fidelity have had little more in the way of remote control than a pause control. Lately, some have come on the market that feature both full remote control and fine fidelity. The installation in my car used the Uher recorder tested a few months ago for HIGH FIDELITY. This recorder is compact, uses a minimum of electricity (something to consider since it runs from the car battery), has excellent fidelity even at  $1\frac{7}{8}$  ips, and can be operated by remote control.

Normally, the remote control unit slips under a typewriter. The three-button section screws to the forward part of a metal plate. I attached this plate to the under side of the dash, then reattached the button section (see illustration).

The remote control cable was extended and runs into the trunk where recorder and inverter are taped together for security. So far, it has not been necessary to anchor the recorder. It just rests on the flat bottom of the trunk. A wire runs from the recorder up to the rear-deck speaker.

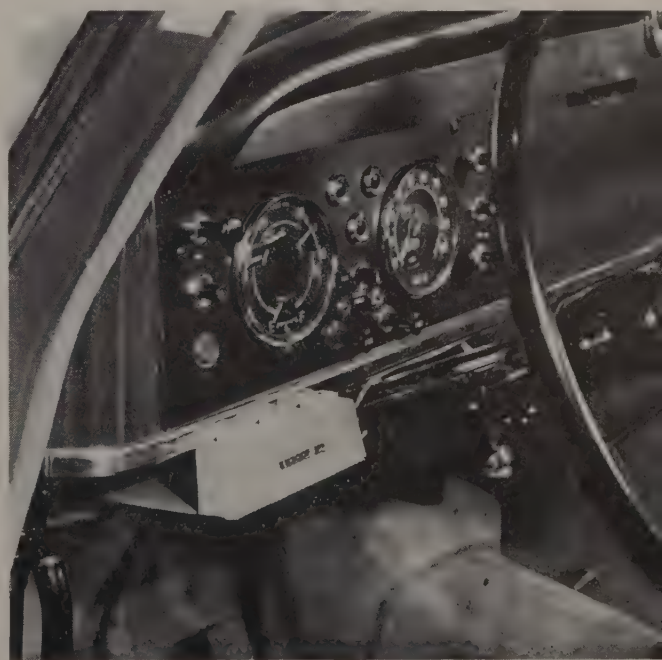
Other recorders with remote control facilities including play, stop, and rewind are the Tandberg "F" models. The F indicates inclusion of remote control operation solenoids at an additional cost of \$50. The model 4F, for example, records on four monophonic channels, plays back prerecorded stereo tapes, and can be converted to record stereophonically.

Since I am not aiming for the ultimate in fidelity, but only for enjoyable listening, while motoring, I use  $1\frac{7}{8}$  ips for music having restricted high-end frequency range, such as piano. At this speed, one and one-half hours of music can be recorded on one track of a five-inch, 900-

foot reel of tape. (At the end of one and one-half hours of driving, it is time to stop, stretch—and turn over the reels.) Practically all orchestral works are recorded at  $3\frac{3}{4}$  ips for best fidelity and wide range.

To stretch playing time as far as reasonably possible, 900-foot reels of extra-play tape are used, though much depends on the timing of the compositions. All the Beethoven piano sonatas (Schnabel's) fitted neatly onto four reels of tape, with room on the last track of the last reel for two of the Variations. The timing, however, is such that the third reel is a 600-footer. Each reel is labeled on the outside, briefly; inside, a three-by-five card gives complete information, including counter index numbers, to facilitate finding specific compositions or movements quickly. Establishing the length of playing time serves another purpose: music can be programmed to the approximate length of any trip. For example, a trip from New York to Philadelphia would please Beethoven lovers since it allows just about enough time for programing two symphonies.

In summary, a tape recorder in your car makes it possible for you to have just the kind of music you want wherever you are. In addition, the remote control type of installation provides security for the recorder, and the handy little repeat button permits replaying of your favorite parts of a composition. Furthermore, it's nice to be able to stop and restart. If the traffic gets heavy, stop the music; start it again with a tap of the play button when the driving crisis is over. But even if your recorder is the standard kind without a remote control feature, you needn't be deterred from enjoying the music of your choice as you drive along. The inverter is the real key to enjoying Mozart as you motor.



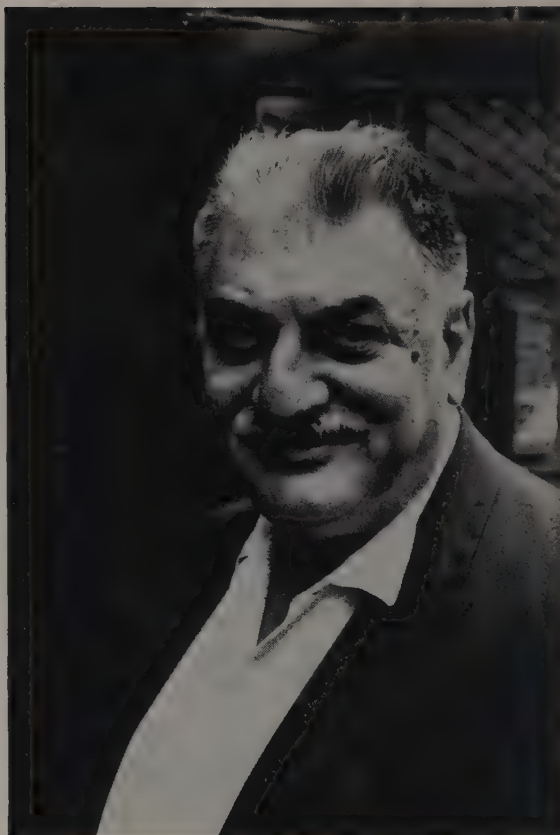
*Dashboard controls (the white unit with three push buttons) permit stowing the Uher recorder itself in the car's trunk.*

**Folkways Records has  
taped everything from cats on back  
fences to Japanese epics.**

# Folkways in Sound...

*or the remarkable enterprises of Mr. Moe Asch*

by ROBERT SHELTON



IF SOME CURIOUS CREATURE from outer space were to land in our midst, how could he get a quick introduction to life on this planet? Phonograph records would certainly be one answer, but then comes the question, "Which records?"

One reply—which would be strongly endorsed by teachers, librarians, musicologists, and the *cognoscenti* of record collecting—would most emphatically be the records made by Folkways. These 700 discs, it could be argued, would tell more about the languages, work and play patterns, social structure, literature, ethnology, and traditional musical expression of man today than any comparable collection on any other label.

In an era when commercial considerations have all too often overshadowed artistic ones, Folkways has held to its principles with the stubbornness of a mailman plodding through snow. In this bustling productive organ-

ization many standard business procedures are alien—and the untried experiment is commonplace. Folkways clings steadfastly to its dominating credo: the phonograph record is a great device for intercommunication between peoples and societies, an easily disseminated artifact for preserving man's culture.

Folkways was organized about twelve years ago, the heir to Disc and, earlier, Asch Records. It has issued the most ambitious collection of primitive, tribal, and ethnic music to be found on commercial discs anywhere, representing some five hundred ethnic and regional groups; its list of spoken word albums is growing; it is the home label for a host of such folk performers as the late murderer-minstrel Leadbelly, Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger, Alan Mills, Sonny Terry, Big Bill Broonzy. Its catalogue also includes a Science Series, coupling the offbeat with material of genuine educational value ("Sounds of the



North American Bullfrog," for example, or "Sounds of a Tropical Rain Forest in America"). The company has recorded some outlandishly obscure religious sects (a recent title is "Sufi Ceremony, Rifa' Ceremony of the Eleventh Day of the Rabi-L-Achien, honoring Abdul Hadir Beker; recorded by the Islaamia Refia Jamaa Sect of Malayan Mohammedans in the Union of South Africa by Kajar the Magician") and has preserved on discs the sound of cats on back fences and children skipping rope.

Guiding all this is Folkways' production director, a heavy-set, stoop-shouldered, amiable man named Moses Asch. At fifty-four, Moe Asch, as he is generally known, is a doggedly creative, self-made intellectual who combines an almost mystical idealism with the cynicism of a visionary living in a brass-tacks society. He is affable and warm through a curtain of shyness. His speech, in a flavorful German-Jewish accent, is at times eloquent, at other times curiously vague as he trails off into a reverie about some recording project of three months hence. At first glance Asch looks as plump and genial as a grandfather is supposed to. "I am a grandfather," says the patriarch of Folkways, who really isn't. "Pete Seeger [whose records are consistently best sellers] is my son. My grandchildren are all the people who listen to my records."

"What sort of man is Moe Asch?" associates, friends, and competitors were asked. "An enigma; you can't help liking him," says one. "Something of a mystery man, but you feel warm toward him at once," says another. "A wonderful cantankerous old codger," says a singer. "Courageous," says a more prosperous competitor who has taken few of Asch's aesthetic chances, but wishes he could have. The picture that emerges is contradictory: an inexorable yet flexible, irascible but tender, unreasonable man of reason.

While Asch is proudly self-made, the materials he works with were passed on from his father Sholem Asch, the noted novelist. The father died in 1957 after a career that included such memorable works as *Three Cities*, *The Nazarene*, and *East River*. The elder Asch was a quixotic man whose writing reflects a mixture of broad Dickensian and Tolstoyan views of life and literature. The novelist's imprimatur was left on Moe, one of four children, in many ways. "He walks, talks, stoops, and shouts just the way the old man did," says Sam Goody, the record merchant, who has been a family friend for more than a quarter century.

There are other similarities. Asch senior was a restless traveler, as is the son, who swallows his shyness and travels to scores of educational conventions, talking with ten thousand persons each year in the interest of Folkways. The father was a humanist publicly, but a stern pater-familias privately—the autocrat of the breakfast and dinner table around whom the whole household revolved. And Moe, too, even when quiet, has a tendency to dominate a room when he walks into it.

Perhaps the most colorful ambiguity in the personality

of Moe Asch is how such a fundamentally kind and generous man can get so riled up. Although close associates indicate that the years and recent successes have tempered the terrible-tempered Mr. Bangs, he is still known to unleash a blast of Billingsgate at some unsuspecting offender. "Gimmicks, gimmicks," he will roar when asked about a competitor's packaging innovation. "Too slick, too polished," he'll snipe, rejecting a folk singer's tapes as "overly urbanized." Once, in the adjacent Cue Recordings studio, a session was ruined by Asch's resonant foot stamping. (The head of the studio solved matters by presenting Folkways with a long carpet runner to deaden the sound of fury.)

But there are just as many examples of Asch's gentleness, selflessness, and patience. "His advance royalties have just about put me through college," one editor-annotator says. "I love him dearly," says Pete Seeger, whose affection is typical of many performers. "I don't mind when Moe shouts at me," says recording engineer Peter Bartók, another famous son of a famous father. "It just helps me know what he is thinking."

Central to understanding much about Folkways' products is the fact that Asch and his lieutenant, Marian Distler, are voluntarily the most overworked people in the industry. "I used to call Folkways a 'two-horse company'—two people who work like horses," Seeger says. Asch puts in an average twelve-hour day, frequently seven days a week. The pert redheaded Miss Distler, who has been working with Asch for twenty years, is president of Folkways, keeper of the exchequer, coordinator, and Girl Friday every day of the week. These two work horses—together with an accountant and a tiny handful of clerks—operate in a drab two-room office off Times Square, dimly lit and lined with shelves and shelves and shelves in the casual disorder of an absent-minded professor's desk.

But while the Folkways regular staff is small, con-



Folk singer Pete Seeger: Asch calls him a son.

tributors to its never out-of-print catalogue are legion. They form, in a loose sense, a world-wide network of scholars, collectors, and editors. Some work on an individual record, others on long-range projects. Although Asch's own interests and knowledge are broad, he delegates to specialists total responsibility for a disc and annotations. The list of experts is endless, but mention should be made of Jaap Kunst, Curt Sachs, Richard Waterman, Henry Cowell, Willard Rhodes, Laura Bolton, Alan Lomax, Marius Barbeau, Edith Fowke, Charles Edward Smith, Kenneth Goldstein, and the late Béla Bartók.

Tying the work of all these specialists together is Harold Courlander, the social anthropologist who is general editor of the Ethnic Folkways Library. One of Folkways' greatest pioneering efforts, this series includes among its hundred or so albums the pure musical expression of primitive or wholly unsophisticated peoples. Some of it is raw, often incomprehensible, such as *Cult Music of Cuba* and music of the Matta Grosso in Brazil. Other albums record simple folk, singing and making functional music in their play, dance, worship, hunting, farming. "We are constantly looking for material," Courlander says. "We hear about a linguist, botanist, anthropologist about to go on an expedition. We get in touch with him and ask him to collect some material for us while he's at it." Or travelers get in touch with Folkways. Once, Courlander relates, a missionary re-

turned from Liberia with a shoe box laden with tapes, all of them covered with a thick coating of mildew. The patina of equatorial humidity was carefully removed and a record produced. In another instance, Folkways was in touch with Harold Schultz, a German scholar then on an expedition in the jungles of South America, but the tape recorder he was using was disintegrated by the heat and dampness. Sometimes collectors just disappear. Folkways loaned tapes to a woman on her way to the Atlas Mountains of North Africa. She was never heard from again. One missionary's efforts at making pretape wire recordings went to no avail when African natives took the wire and made jewelry out of it.

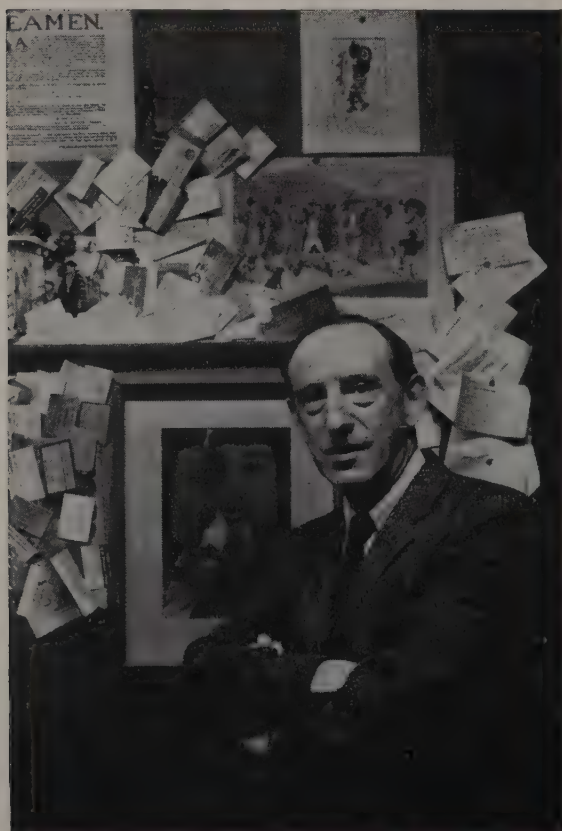
Another of the Folkways "regulars" is Frederic Ramsey, Jr., the authority on jazz. One of Asch's early associates interested in Negro folk music and its jazz emanations, Ramsey edited the ten-volume "Music from the South" series and ten of the eleven volumes of the valued Folkways jazz series. The latter's 162 titles, issued between 1950 and 1953, provided a history of the whole development of jazz and sparked an era of LP reissues by major and minor labels. More recently, the well-known researcher Samuel B. Charters has produced albums on the origins of jazz, has rediscovered the *Story of Blind Willie Johnson* (the gospel street singer) and the blues singer Lightnin' Hopkins, and has made a striking collection of Negro music from the Bahamas. Charters is now off on a major collecting project which is expected to include a trip to Japan on the trail of the epic ballads of the thirteenth century still being sung by blind minstrels. Called *heiki monogatari*, these epics reportedly take three days each to retell.

Still another Folkways contributor is Tony Schwartz, a tape reporter who is interested in documenting the folklore of the cities, as the sounds of life in New York. Schwartz has done eleven records for Folkways and one, *The New York Taxi Driver*, for Columbia. Despite the fact that the Columbia disc sold more in six months than all his Folkways records combined, Schwartz is one of the large number who will continue to offer their work to Moe Asch for release.

Why do these men and so many others turn to Folkways with their tapes and notes? Asch gives the reason succinctly: "I maintain an open door for anything interesting and significant in the field of authentic folk music and jazz. My artists come to me when they can't get their stuff issued elsewhere, and stay with me because I let them express themselves as they please. None of us makes much money, but we like what we are doing."

This noncommercial entrepreneur was born in Warsaw in 1905. Early in World War I the Asches emigrated to the United States, but Sholem Asch, restless, questing man that he was, could not keep still. As a child, he lived in all five boroughs of New York with his peripatetic family. It was in the streets of Brooklyn and at his mother's knee that Moe had his earliest exposure to folk music. His first taste of jazz

*Continued on page 102*



*Harold Courlander, general editor of the ethnic series.*



# towards stereo COMPATIBILITY

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**A compatible stereo  
disc would be much to  
everyone's advantage.  
What are the prospects  
for the future?**

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“W<sub>H</sub>Y don't they put out a record that will play monophonically through an ordinary high-fidelity setup and stereophonically through a stereo system?”

“They” in this instance refers to the record industry, and the question must have been posed hundreds of times during the past two years by record dealers and distributors as well as by their customers. To the former, the question directly involves dollars and cents; as long as two separate recorded versions of the same musical work have to be carried in inventory, dealers are faced with the unpleasant option of investing double the number of dollars in stock or of carrying only half the number of titles. It would seem that manufacturers too would have much to gain from the development of a compatible disc. Currently, every phase of disc production has to be duplicated, from cutting the master to printing the sleeve or album cover. As for the record collector, he would benefit since the dealer would presumably be able to carry a wider selection of albums; and perhaps lower prices would reflect the lower cost of producing one compatible disc rather than two versions of the same recording.

The question came to the fore again recently with the announcement by a small record company, Design, that it has been pressing a compatible stereo-mono disc for a number of months and that it intends to continue to merchandise it. Design states that it sold the identical record in two different jackets, one labeled “monophonic,” the other “stereophonic.” Both discs, however, were produced from the same master. About 150,000 of these discs were sold without producing a single customer complaint, the firm avers. Now, Design is labeling all of its long-playing records “compatible.”

The Design system was subsequently studied by the Record Industry Association of America (RIAA), the group that sets standards for record manufacturers, and its use was not generally recommended. The RIAA felt that it represented no progress over what the industry was able to achieve two years ago. What, then, is the problem? With so much to gain at all levels, why hasn't some engineer produced a practical solution?

A monophonic cartridge is unable to track a fully cut stereophonic record. Bear in mind that a stereo groove moves the stylus both laterally and vertically. A stereo cartridge is compliant, or flexible, in both directions and, of course, translates these separate movements into two sets of electrical impulses. A monophonic cartridge, on the other hand, is compliant mainly in the lateral direction. A fully cut stereo disc thrusts the needle upward and, because a monophonic cartridge resists the upward thrust, the needle is popped out of the groove.

Note the qualification "fully cut." It is an important one. If low frequencies are reduced or attenuated in the vertical component of the stereo disc, a monophonic cartridge can then track the disc with ease. We can compare the vertical cut of a stereo record with the action of a body of water. The higher frequencies move the stylus only slightly; they can be said to be like the ripples produced by dropping a fair-sized pebble into a quiet pond. Such ripples would have no effect on a canoe floating on the pond's surface. Low frequencies, by the same token, are like the choppy waves raised by a sudden storm, which can easily swamp a canoe. In essence, the attenuation of low frequencies is like spreading oil to calm troubled waters.

When the RIAA first set standards for stereo discs two years ago, it considered a proposal set forth by Columbia Records for a compatible disc. Columbia proposed that the vertical low frequency component be diminished in the cutting of the disc and then compensated for by special circuitry in the playback equipment. While the Columbia idea had definite merit, the RIAA rejected it on the basis that it was something of a compromise. The group may also have felt that, since this system required special circuitry, it might deter the general move to stereo for an indeterminate period.

The basic principle of attenuating low frequencies in the vertical component is the one Design has adopted to overcome the problem of monophonic cartridge tracking. Specifically, this company begins rolling off low frequencies at 100 cps by 3 db, by 7 db at 50 cps, and by 11 db at 30 cps, where they are clipped. No bass is attenuated in the lateral cut. Worth noting at this point is the fact that any manufacturer can cut a record by this formula with currently available equipment. Design uses a Fairchild cutter which, interestingly, has a bass attenuation control as standard equipment. The great majority of discs today are cut on Westrex equipment which can be adapted to perform the same function.

While Design's "compatible" disc then represents a compromise compared to a fully cut stereo record, the firm asserts that the compromise is not as great as one might at first think. The bass, it points out, is not compromised in the lateral cut and, since low frequencies are nondirectional, the stereo effect is not lessened. The bass

in the lateral cut will seem to be coming from both channels. Monophonic playback will not be affected in any way. As proof of its contention, Design has pressed a special test record with bands cut in full stereo juxtaposed against the compromise stereo cuts. It is claimed that the average listener with average equipment will not easily be able to note any obvious disparity between the true and the compromise stereo cuts.

In defense of its point of view, Design stresses the fact that recording engineers consistently make compromises for reasons other than compatibility, often for mechanical production reasons. The resulting discs, says Design, are compatible in the same sense that its records are compatible; the difference is merely that they are not so labeled and cost a dollar more. Proving this contention would, of course, be extremely difficult.

Still another factor in the problem of compatibility is that of the durability of the stereophonic disc when played on monophonic equipment. When stereo first came along, manufacturers set down conditions for stylus tip size (.7 mil radius) and tracking pressure (not more than 7 grams). It was thought that the regular stylus tip radius (1 mil) combined with a heavier tracking pressure would do irreparable harm to the delicate stereo microgrooves. Design's engineers have not completed exhaustive examinations, but preliminary tests have satisfied them that a stereo disc will last for more than the normal number of playings given a recording by the average purchaser. For purposes of immediate investigation, Design played its compatible disc more than one hundred times and then subjected it to listening tests. The company maintains that both engineers and musicians failed to discern any appreciable difference between fully cut stereo discs and the compatible variety even when both had been submitted to repeated playings.

Some observers believe that the recent decision on the part of record firms not to go along with the Design brand of compatibility may have been dictated in large part by the fact that the move would have made obsolete large existing inventories of both LPs and stereo discs. Those concerned with full-range reproduction of sound in their homes would

probably prefer to believe that the course the industry will ultimately take will be determined by its desire to put the finest sound possible in the record groove. Despite immediate decisions, one fact is evident: a compatible stereo disc is such a highly desirable thing that the search for a method to achieve it will undoubtedly continue. One day, in the not too distant future, that way may be found.

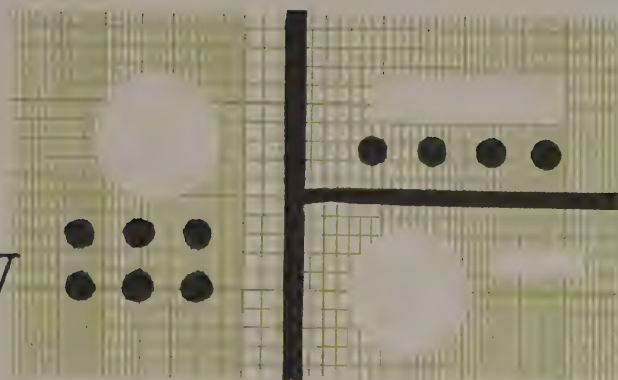
And what of Design's "compatible" record? It looks no different from an ordinary record and, on a large percentage of the phonographs in use, it will sound no different. The firm has chosen a lonely but sometimes rewarding position in leaving the verdict to the public.





*The consumer's guide  
to new and important  
high-fidelity equipment*

high fidelity



## EQUIPMENT REPORTS

### Bell 6070 Carillon

### AM-FM Stereo Tuner



**AT A GLANCE:** The Bell Model 6070 stereo AM-FM tuner is a very fine one, matching the 6060 Carillon amplifier in styling and control layout. Its FM section is above average in sensitivity and is exceptionally stable. The AM tuner is quite sensitive and has good quality, though not comparable to the FM section in frequency response. Crafted in rich saddle-tan vinyl, the 6070 is priced at \$189.95.

**IN DETAIL:** The FM tuner circuitry of the Bell 6070 features a cascode RF amplifier, three IF stages, and a ratio detector. Two of the IF stages act as limiters for strong signals. Combined with the inherent insensitivity of a ratio detector to amplitude variations, this gives the 6070 virtually constant audio output for any signal over 10 microvolts in strength.

An AFC circuit is included, with a front panel switch to cut it out if desired. The AFC reduces drift over six times, yet it is hardly needed since the total drift of the tuner (without AFC) from a cold start is less than 30 kc.

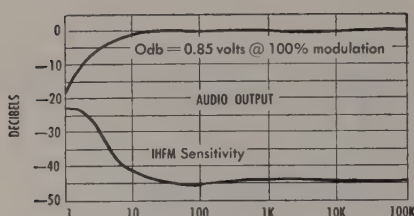
The usable sensitivity (according to IHFM standards) is 3.4 microvolts, which places it in the upper ranks of FM tuners in this respect. The distortion at 100% modulation is about 0.65% for any signal stronger than about 20 microvolts.

The frequency response of the Bell 6070 is flat within 0.9 db from 20 to 20,000 cps. Switching on the AFC (which sometimes causes a loss of low frequency response in improperly designed FM tuners) actually caused a slight rise of 2 db at 20 cps. Since this rise is confined to the region below 50 cps, it is not audible.

The AM tuner, with a completely separate tuning control and tuning meter, has two degrees of IF selectivity. The sharp position is best for reception of weak signals or in the presence of electrical noise, but the broad position is much more compatible with use in a high-fidelity system. The frequency response, even in the broad position, is noticeably narrower than that of the FM tuner, although the AM tuner is very clean-sounding and has a quiet background. A 10-kc whistle filter is highly effective.

Both tuners have individual cathode follower outputs. These have a sufficiently low impedance so that the high frequency response of the tuner is totally unaffected by almost any length of shielded cable connected to its outputs.

Apart from the separate AM and FM tuning knobs, the Bell 6070 has four lever-type switches on its front panel. These match the control layout of the companion 6060 amplifier rather well. One controls the power to the tuner, and adjacent to it is the AFC ON-OFF switch. On the other side of the panel are the AM SHARP-BROAD switch and the MODE SELECTOR switch. This feeds either the FM output or the AM output to both output connectors in the rear of the tuner, when set to the corresponding position. In the center, or STEREO, position, the AM and FM signals are channeled to their respective output jacks. Individual level controls for the two outputs are



located on the rear of the chassis. A multiplex output, ahead of the FM deemphasis network, is also provided.

An unusual feature of the AM tuner is the absence of a loopstick, or ferrite rod antenna. With no antenna connected, there is no trace of a signal from the AM tuner, yet only a few feet of wire are sufficient to bring in a multitude of stations within a fifty-mile radius. In rural or other weak signal areas, a long wire should do a good job.

The audio output from the Bell 6070 is about 0.85 volts from a 100% modulated FM signal. This is more than enough to drive a sensitive amplifier like the companion Bell 6060, but it is possible that another type with lower gain would not be as suitable for use with this tuner.

In conclusion, the Bell 6070 tuner might be described as a very well-designed and well-constructed unit which does just what its manufacturer says it does. It is a fitting companion for the equally fine 6060 amplifier.

H. H. LABS

## KLH 6 Speaker System



*Transient response to 5-kc tone burst.*

**AT A GLANCE:** The KLH 6 is a compact bookshelf-type speaker system employing a 12-in. acoustic suspension woofer and a special cone tweeter with a 1,500-cycle crossover. Its response is unusually smooth over the entire audio spectrum, and its transient response, as evidenced by tone-burst tests is outstanding. The KLH Model 6 comes in a variety of finishes—mahogany, korina, walnut, oiled walnut, cherry—and also in unfinished walnut, birch, cherry, or fir. Prices range from \$119 to \$134.

**IN DETAIL:** The principle of the acoustic suspension speaker is well known by now. Distortion in the loudspeaker is reduced drastically by allowing a long linear cone excursion and using the compliance of the air in a sealed cabinet to restore the cone to its neutral position.

The KLH 6 has an acoustic suspension woofer (licensed by Acoustic Research, Inc.) which is manufactured in a rather unusual manner. The woofer frame and magnet assembly are actually cast onto the front panel of the cabinet with an epoxy resin. This makes a rigid assembly, in which the front panel actually is part of the structure of the woofer. The tweeter is similarly cast into the front panel. The fully sealed cabinet is filled with Fiberglas, as are all acoustic suspension speaker systems.

The woofer has a felted paper cone, manufactured in the KLH plant, with a compliant outer rim suspension molded of phenolic-impregnated cloth treated with rubber. It is designed to handle frequencies up to 1,500 cps. The built-in crossover network uses air core coils and oil-filled condensers. The tweeter has a thin, shell-like cone which uses a very compliant butyl rubber suspension to allow excursions up to 1/16 in. This unusually large cone excursion (for a tweeter) allows a relatively small cone to handle frequencies down to 1,500 cps in a manner analogous to the low frequency performance of the woofer.

A three-position toggle switch on the back of the cabinet allows an increase or decrease of some 2.5 db in tweeter level. Disconnecting jumpers on the connection posts also permits driving either the woofer or tweeter individually.

Our frequency response runs were made out of doors, with the speaker facing upward. The microphone was five feet above the speaker, on its central axis. As the curve shows, the response is unusually smooth, with a relatively insignificant peak at the crossover frequency. Many of the peaks and holes are the result of diffraction effects at the edges of the cabinet, though the only ones which we can definitely identify as such are the irregularities between 11 kc and 15 kc. These shifted position when the microphone was moved, indicating that they were not caused by the speaker itself. The dashed line shows the response of the microphone itself, and it can be seen that the measured response is a rather faithful replica of it, except for the slight rolloff above 10 kc.

The harmonic distortion of the woofer was measured as a function of frequency, up to the point where it became too small to measure (at 1%, slightly above 50 cps). The low frequency distortion is obviously very low when compared to that of most conventional speakers.

The polar response of the tweeter was measured by rotating the speaker with the microphone in a fixed position, using a constant amplitude signal at 7 kc. The high frequency dispersion is excellent, with hardly any reduction on 7-kc response up to



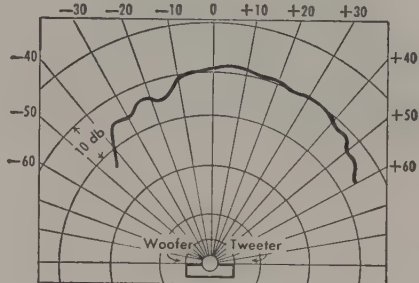
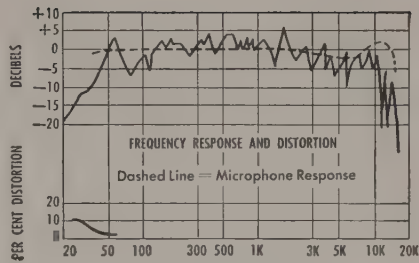
45 degrees off axis. In one direction the edge of the cabinet interferes with the high frequency sound propagation, causing a more rapid drop-off in response. Even so, the response is down only 5 db over a 90-degree angle, with the speaker lying on its side. When it is standing up (as KLH recommends), the polar angle is about 110 degrees, a very good figure for a single cone radiator.

The most remarkable feature of the KLH 6 is its transient response in tone-burst tests. The oscilloscope photo shows its response to a 5-kc tone burst, indicating nearly perfect transient response at that frequency. This is a typical presentation of its response throughout the tweeter operating range.

In listening comparisons with a reference speaker system, the KLH 6 showed a noticeably more solid midrange. Its lows are very clean and solid, equal to those of the reference speaker at 40 cps and above. Its highs are clean and transparent. Over-all, the sound is musical and unstrained, and superior to many far more expensive speaker systems. The chief criticism we could level against the KLH 6 was a tendency towards heaviness at times, particularly on male voices. This, of course, is frequently the result of room acoustics, but was not observed to the same extent on the reference speaker in the same acoustic environment.

Efficiency of the KLH 6, while low compared to that of most conventional speaker systems, was over 4 db higher than our reference speaker, which should make it suitable for use with almost any good amplifier, even of modest power ratings.

The KLH 6 was considered by most of those who were exposed to it during our tests as one of the finest compact speaker systems, and a remarkable value. Although it shares many of the characteristics of other acoustic suspension speakers, such as low distortion and extended bass response, it differs from them in its sound. Obviously, when comparing speakers of this caliber, it is not feasible to grade them in ranking order, but we strongly recommend that anyone considering the purchase of a speaker in this price range listen to the KLH 6 as well as to competitive units. H. H. LABS.



Polar response is about 110 degrees.

**AT A GLANCE:** The Bogen-Presto Model TT3 is a single speed (33 $\frac{1}{3}$  rpm) belt-driven turntable with a hysteresis-synchronous motor. The 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ -pound aluminum turntable is driven via a resilient belt from the shaft of the motor. The wow, flutter, and rumble levels are acceptably low, though the rumble level is only slightly better than that of the best record changers.

The Model PA1 tone arm, solidly constructed of aluminum, has an easily removable cartridge shell, and an arm rest with an effective locking device to prevent accidental damage to the cartridge. It has no counterweight, depending solely on a spring to adjust stylus force. The range of adjustment of this spring is not sufficient to handle some of the heavier cartridges, however. The tracking error can be very low, but not when the arm is mounted according to instructions or fitted with a standard-sized cartridge. The TT3 turntable, finished in oxford gray with black and silver accents, is priced at \$59.95; the PA1 arm at \$24.95; the walnut finish base at \$13.95. Prices are slightly higher in some postal zones.

**Bogen-Presto  
TT3 Turntable, PA1 Arm**

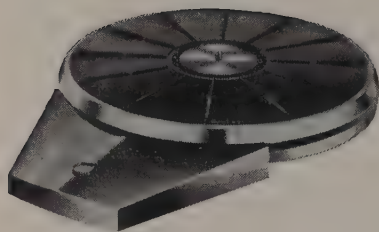
**IN DETAIL:** Mechanically, the Bogen-Presto TT3 turntable is very well built. The heavy aluminum turntable is supported on a sleeve-type bearing and turns with a minimum of friction. The synchronous motor is supported on three rubber vibration isolators, and the belt (which appears to be a rubber- or plastic-impregnated cloth) looks as though it should absorb any flutter or other speed fluctuations quite well.

Flutter measured at 0.13%, which is well within the manufacturer's specification of 0.15%. Wow was somewhat above the rated value, reaching about 0.2% on occasion. It did not occur at a once-per-turntable revolution rate, but rather less frequently than that, and could not be heard even when organ music was being played.



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**REPORT POLICY**



The turntable has a stroboscope disc permanently attached to it, and this showed the speed to be exactly  $33\frac{1}{3}$  rpm. This was unaffected by any line voltage variations down to 50 volts, and the torque of the drive system was such that one had to take a firm grasp of the turntable to slow it down noticeably, let alone stop it.

The weakest aspect of the unit we tested was its rumble which was far in excess of the manufacturer's specification of "52 db below average recording level"—a level not specified. Our measurements showed a lateral rumble of  $-36$  db relative to 7 cm/sec at 1,000 cps, using RIAA playback equalization. With a stereo cartridge, responding to vertical as well as lateral rumble components, the rumble measured  $-33.5$  db, indicating a vertical rumble approximately as strong as the lateral rumble.

Rumble was mostly 30 cycles (motor revolution rate). It was not bothersome at usual listening levels, and possibly would not be noticed unless the volume were turned up high. It was slightly better than the best record changers in this respect.

The Model PA1 arm was tested mounted on a Bogen-Presto PB7 walnut base, available predrilled for this turntable and arm. Because the arm has no counterweight, there is a minimum of rear overhang, which allows a pivot-to-stylus dimension of over 11 in., a feature desirable from the standpoint of low tracking error.

Our initial measurements revealed a rather large tracking error, some 4 or 5 degrees over most of the record surface and as much as 13 degrees at a 2-in. radius. We found that if the cartridge was mounted farther back in the plug-in shell, so as to give a  $\frac{1}{4}$ -in. stylus-to-mounting-center dimension instead of the customary  $\frac{7}{16}$  in., the tracking error was substantially reduced. It then developed that the predrilled motor board had the arm mounting hole drilled  $\frac{3}{16}$  in. too far from the turntable center (using the manufacturer's recommended spacing as a guide). This error, combined with the unorthodox cartridge mounting, produced a very low tracking error, less than  $1\frac{1}{2}$  degrees over most of the record.

Unfortunately, most cartridges cannot be slid back and forth in the head, but must be mounted in a fixed position. Some, such as the Miratwin 210, are easily adjustable. If another type of cartridge is used with this arm, it would be advisable to mount the arm somewhat farther from the turntable center than the recommended  $10\frac{1}{4}$  in. Something like  $10\frac{1}{2}$  in. should be more nearly correct.

The stylus force adjustment is not sufficient to counterbalance fully any cartridge weighing more than 5 grams, which is to say all cartridges. A cartridge weighing more than 10 grams will not be adjustable to less than 5 grams force, which is on the high side for a stereo pickup.

H. H. LABS

## Stromberg-Carlson FM-443 FM Tuner



**AT A GLANCE:** The Stromberg-Carlson FM-443, one of the least expensive FM tuners on the market, approaches the performance of more expensive equipment. It is therefore an especially good value for anyone who wants to obtain the highest level of performance in a moderate-priced system. The tuner sells for \$79.95 and is available in gold and white or black and brushed chrome.

**IN DETAIL:** The Stromberg-Carlson FM-443 is one of the simplest FM tuners imaginable. It has only five tubes, one of which does triple duty in the packaged "front-end" as a grounded grid RF amplifier, converter, and oscillator. This is followed by two IF amplifiers and a limiter. Semiconductor diodes are used as a ratio detector, as well as a voltage-variable capacitor for the AFC system. There is one stage of audio amplification and a tuning-eye tube. A silicon rectifier is used in the power supply. The pilot light is a neon tube. Obviously, the fewer the number of tubes, the fewer the number of burn-outs and the less likely the need for service. This philosophy has even been carried to the pilot lamp, which should have an indefinitely long life.

The front panel has almost the irreducible minimum of controls. One knob (for tuning) and three slide switches are the entire control complement. The switches are for AFC ON-OFF, LOCAL-DISTANT, and POWER.

The rear of the chassis carries three phono jacks, as well as antenna terminals. The jacks are for amplified audio output, unamplified detector audio output, and detector output before deemphasis for multiplex operation.

Physically, the FM-443 is unorthodox, being relatively deep (11 in. behind the panel) and with a small panel  $4\frac{1}{2}$  in. high and  $7\frac{1}{4}$  in. wide. This is certainly compact enough



for anyone, and makes it easy for Stromberg-Carlson to combine this set with their matching AM-441 tuner to form an AM-FM stereo tuner with a conventional panel form factor. Incidentally, a power connector on the rear of the FM-443 supplies all power to the AM tuner or to a multiplex adapter.

In operation, the FM-443 has a couple of quirks. The dial, located behind the panel, is circular and only the portion of the band to which the set is tuned is visible through a magnifying window. This must be viewed from directly in front of the set in order to be read. The tuning action has a rather uncertain feel to it, with what seems to be considerable backlash. In spite of this, we found the set easy to tune, with the aid of an excellent and very sensitive eye tube.

The AFC is very mild in its action, since it reduces tuning errors and drift by  $2\frac{1}{2}$  times. It shows no tendency to be pulled by a strong adjacent channel signal, and we left it on during normal use of the tuner.

The so-called LOCAL-DISTANT switch is nothing of the sort, being merely an audio attenuator which reduces the audio gain some 15 db in the LOCAL position. Since the FM-443 has very good limiting and AGC action, this serves no purpose whatever, and could have been omitted.

The audio output level is high (as much as 5 volts for a 100% modulated signal) and perhaps the LOCAL-DISTANT switch is best left in the LOCAL position, which reduces this to 1 volt. The unamplified detector output is about 0.7 volts, a usable though slightly low value. Since the audio amplifier does not have a particularly low output impedance (actually higher than the output impedance from the DET jack), it is important to use short shielded cables to the preamplifier to avoid loss of high frequencies. Lengths up to six feet should cause no trouble.

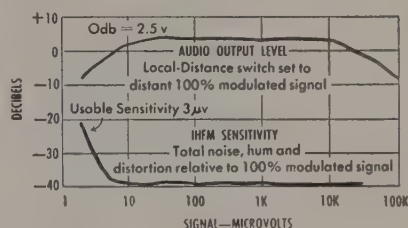
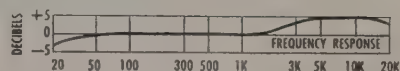
This brings us to frequency response. In an FM tuner this is a question of component tolerances in the deëmphesis network. We found a pronounced high frequency boost in the unit tested, starting at 1,500 cps and amounting to 5 db in the 6- to 15-kc range. This is heard as a bit of extra sparkle or brightness in the sound, especially when compared to a tuner having correct deëmphesis. It is not at all objectionable, but cannot be compensated by tone controls without a loss of extreme highs.

The sensitivity measurement of the FM-443, according to IHFM standards, is amazing. Its usable sensitivity is 3 microvolts, a figure not usually found in tuners in this price range. This high sensitivity has not been obtained at the expense of IF bandwidth, since deviations of 180 kc can be handled at moderate signal strengths without serious distortion. This corresponds to 240% modulation, well beyond the capabilities of FM broadcast stations.

The distortion at 100% modulation is about 1% for signals stronger than 10 microvolts. This is somewhat higher than the distortion of tuners which cost up to twice the price of the FM-443 but is at least as low as any tuner we have tested in or near the price class of the FM-443.

The warm-up drift is slight, about 60 kc without AFC, and occurs in the first few minutes of operation. The tuner drifts appreciably with line voltage changes, but the AFC reduces this to acceptable limits.

H. H. LABS.



*The Audiogersh Stereotwin 210-D Stereo Cartridge report, announced for this issue, will appear in July.*

## NEXT MONTH'S REPORTS

**Rek-O-Kut N33H Turntable**

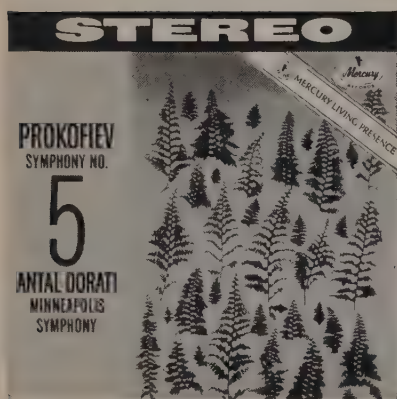
**Sherwood S-5000 Stereo Control Amplifier**

**Viking Tape Deck and Preamplifier**

**Tandberg Model 5 Tape Recorder . . . and others**

# NEW COLLECTORS ITEMS IN MERCURY LIVING PRESENCE

*Top/Winter*



MG50258/SR90258



MG50254/SR90254



MG50228/SR90228

PROKOFIEV Symphony No. 5, Opus 100. Minneapolis Symphony, Dorati. MG50258/SR90258

BERLIOZ Symphonie Fantastique. Detroit Symphony, Paray. MG50254/SR90254

DUPRÉ AT SAINT-SULPICE, Volume III: FRANCK Grande Pièce Symphonique; Fantaisie in A major; Pastorale. Marcel Dupré, organist. MG50228/SR90228

HINDEMITH Symphony in B flat; SCHOENBERG Theme and Variations; STRAVINSKY Symphonies of Wind Instruments. Eastman Wind Ensemble, Fennell. MG50143/SR90143

MENDELSSOHN Symphony No. 3 ("Scotch"); Fingal's Cave Overture. London Symphony, Dorati. MG50123/SR90123

SR indicates the stereo album number, MG, the monaural album number.



745 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK 22, NEW YORK



MG50143/SR90143



MG50123/SR90123

CIRCLE 65 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE





by Roland Gelatt

## Music Makers

CARNEGIE HALL is not coming down after all—and for that we can thank the violinist Isaac Stern, who has shown that an individual still has the power to grapple with blind historical forces.

Everyone agreed it was a shame to tear down a structure as useful and memorable as Carnegie Hall. But all the old buildings in New York were being demolished, and what could anyone do to stop it? Such was the fatalistic state of affairs in January when Mr. Stern—midway in a Canadian concert tour—faced up to the fact that Carnegie Hall would really be razed in the summer if someone didn't do something fast. Like everybody else, he had been waiting for a miracle to save it—and the miracle hadn't materialized. So, having a couple of free days between concerts, he took a plane to New York and laid the problem before his friend Jacob M. Kaplan, a businessman, philanthropist, and supporter of deserving causes. Between them, they corralled a high-powered Citizens Committee for Carnegie Hall and went to work to stave off the wreckers. Three months later the hall had been saved.

Legislation is now in force enabling the City of New York to purchase Carnegie Hall from its present owner and to lease it, tax-free, to a nonprofit organization. The city will float a bond issue of sufficient amount to acquire and renovate the building, and these bonds will in time be paid off from the hall's rental income.

Carnegie's new operators have a seller's market for next season. Its regular tenants—including the New York Philharmonic with its four concerts per week—will all be back. Beginning with the 1961-62 season, however, the old hall faces competition from a brand-new one in Lincoln Center. Carnegie will be ready to meet it. The hall is to be air-conditioned, the façade modernized, the intermission facilities enlarged and refurb-

ished. Steps will be taken to eliminate the subway rumble that has made the hall less than ideal for stereo recording. Facilities for telecasting from its stage are to be installed. Moreover, the new Carnegie Hall management intends to promote musical activities within the hall in addition to supervising the real estate. One of its prime objectives is the formation of a second permanent New York orchestra, which would give performances at popular prices and provide a platform for young talent.

Now that Carnegie Hall is in the clear, what about the old Met?

RUSSIAN RECORDINGS are to appear here under new auspices beginning this fall. Until recent months the Russians had channeled all their tapes to Leeds Music Corporation, which in turn leased them on a royalty basis to various record companies. Now all that has been changed. Leeds is out of the picture (except for the tapes it already has on hand) and the franchise for U.S.S.R. recordings has gone to Recording Artist Music Corp., better known as Ramco.

The new agreement, signed in Moscow two months ago, is the outcome of eighteen months' negotiation by J. Jay Frankel, Ramco's young president. Frankel has been importing films from the Soviet Union and its satellites for several years, makes frequent business trips to Prague, Warsaw, and Moscow, and has become acquainted with many high-ranking officials in the Eastern cultural ministries. He acquired rights to the Czech Supraphon catalogue a year ago and entered the record business here with two labels—Artia and Parliament. Now that he controls exclusive U. S., Canadian, and British rights to the entire Russian catalogue, Ramco's record operation will undoubtedly grow in importance.

The Russian recordings will be mar-

keted here in two forms. Some will appear on imported Russian pressings bearing the MK (for Mezhdunarodnaya Kniga) label; others will be produced in the United States from Russian tapes and will appear on either the Artia or Parliament label. Altogether, about 120 Russian recordings will be issued here each year. Ramco does not intend to lease the Russian tapes to other companies in this country.

The first release, due in September, will include a new Sviatoslav Richter recording of Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* (on the Artia label) and Bolshoi Theatre Orchestra performances of the complete *Sleeping Beauty* and *Romeo and Juliet* ballet scores (on the MK label). It is expected that Soviet stereo recordings will make their debut here by the end of the year.

Ramco's contract, Mr. Frankel told us, prevents other companies from sending equipment into the U.S.S.R. and making recordings there—thus apparently frustrating the long-standing efforts on the part of both EMI and Decca-London to send their own crews into the Bolshoi Theatre.

WE HEAR rumors that RCA Victor's summer recording plans include a Verdi Requiem with Rysanek, Simionato, Bjoerling, Tozzi, and the Vienna Philharmonic under Reiner, a *Traviata* with Moffo, Tucker, and Merrill, and an *Otello* with Rysanek, Vickers, and Gobbi. The grapevine also has it that Decca-London will be doing a stereo remake of *Die Fledermaus* under Karajan, an uncut *Tristan* under Solti with Birgit Nilsson, and a *Ballo in Maschera* with Nilsson, Simionato, Bjoerling, MacNeil, and Siepi. EMI-Capitol hopes to get Sir Thomas Beecham's Glyndebourne production of the *Magic Flute* on tape, as well as a new *Bohème* with Victoria de los Angeles.



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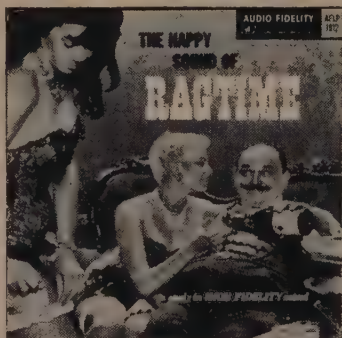
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## Records in Review



# Poulenc's *La Voix humaine*, A Monodrama Turned Into Music

by Conrad L. Osborne



Soria Series

*The composer with soloist Denise Duval.*

WHEN I first read reports of the world premiere of Poulenc's *La Voix humaine* (Paris Opéra-Comique, February 6, 1959), I had my doubts. Here was Poulenc, it seemed, teaming up with Cocteau to astonish us with a tricky little *coup de théâtre*. Everything seemed to point to it. Both these enormously talented artists have been known to toy with form and style for their own sakes; both, we could assume, would take glee in the very prospect of a musical monodrama which might humbug us for a fast three quarters of an hour. It would all be over before we knew it, and we would never quite know what had taken place. There is also a certain tradition in the French lyric theatre which says, "You see, we don't really mean it. We have pretended for the better part of three hours, and have shed a tear or two, but aha!—it was all fool's play, and we can go home happy now."

I suppose that the present work is a trick, in that it demonstrates the theatrical workability of a form which has very seldom even been considered for an opera. There is Schoenberg's *Erwartung*, which has scored a minor *succès d'estime* in Europe; Rachmaninoff's *The Miser*; Weisgall's *The Stronger* (in which there is another character on stage, though silent); and perhaps a few other efforts which have not attained even the modest recognition accorded these works. In fact, there is little enough such material in any dramatic form. Cocteau's original *La Voix humaine*, introduced at the Comédie-Française in 1932, is the only spoken monodrama of any currency that I can think of, though extended sections come to mind—the first scene of Rice's *The Adding Machine*, for instance, which forms almost a separate playlet, is spoken entirely by Mrs. Zero, though Mr. Zero is, to be sure, physically present.

*La Voix humaine* is a true monodrama. Its one character is a nameless woman, elegant and young, who talks for forty-five minutes into a telephone. On the other end of the line is her lover, whose reactions are sometimes pictured in the orchestra. They are saying good-by. The course of the conversation is taken up largely with nervous chitchat concerning small topics, returning insistently to nostalgic references to events that have passed between the lovers, or familiar articles of clothing, or little games they have habitually played. Several times the conversation is interrupted by cutting of the line; each time he calls back. Slowly, the anguish of the woman's loneliness and the desperate nature of her need for her lover are made apparent. At first, she lies about the events of the previous evening—she had been at Martha's, she says. But then she tells the truth: she had sat in her room by the

phone, waiting for him to call. She had later swallowed twelve sleeping pills, and then, lacking the courage to die alone, had called Martha. Martha had brought the doctor, and had stayed with her until she felt better. No, she will not do it again . . . one doesn't try that twice. The tone of her talk becomes increasingly personal, increasingly involved and tense. At last the time comes—she urges him to make an end. Then he is gone. With a stifled repeated cry of "*Je l'aime, je l'aime . . .*" she goes limp across the bed, and the telephone falls to the floor "like a stone," as Cocteau would have it.

There is little more to be said about the play, except that every detail is handled with the utmost sensitivity and perceptiveness. One is never in doubt as to exactly what the woman is feeling, regardless of what she may be saying, and one even gets a fairly good picture of the voiceless lover, solicitous and somewhat guilt-ridden, but eager to call it quits. Much of this, naturally, is due to Poulenc. I do not think it is correct to say that he has merely written continuous inci-

dental music to a successful play—the score seems to me to create an entire dimension that could not possibly be present in the spoken drama. In the first place, the musical inflections indicated for the solo voice constitute in themselves a reinterpretation of the woman's role; in the second place, the orchestra adds a point of view on her situation which simply could not be there without the music. It also, of course, tells us what is going on—as with the sudden burst of jazzlike sound when she hints to the man that she knows he is not calling from home, or the insistent rising theme that wells up whenever she recalls their times together or expresses her love for him.

How much of this would stand up minus Denise Duval, I cannot say. It is quite inconceivable that anyone could play the role better. Her every inflection goes straight to the underlying feeling. It is almost irrelevant to speak of her voice or her singing, for she has eliminated any suspicion of "art" from her performance. Still, it might be noted that her soprano responds instantaneously to ev-

ery dramatic demand over quite a wide range, and that she never has to bother with shifting gears or "placing" her voice, which would be quite disastrous in this instance. It is as close to a perfect performance as a singing-actress could come, and it is heart-breaking.

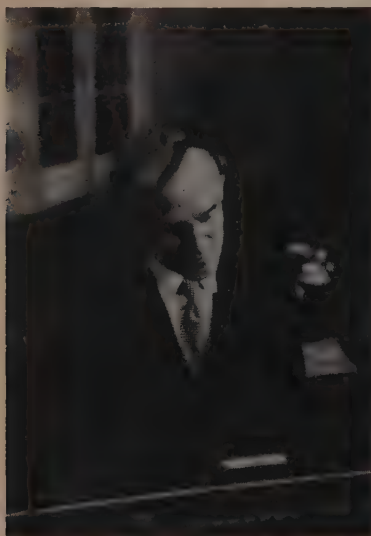
The Opéra-Comique orchestra under Georges Prêtre does just what Poulenc intended, which is to "bathe the entire work in an orchestral sound of the utmost sensuousness." The sound is fine, with stereo adding some dimension, though there are no directional effects. The Soria Series album is relatively modest, since this is a single record, but it includes text and translation, notes by Cocteau and Poulenc, and essays by Janet Flanner (Genet) and Henri Hell.

#### POULENC: *La Voix humaine*

Denise Duval (s), *The Woman*. Orchestra of Théâtre National de l'Opéra-Comique, Georges Prêtre, cond.

● RCA VICTOR LS 2385. LP. \$4.98.

● ● RCA VICTOR LSS 2385. SD. \$5.98



*The unseen pianist can be heard.*

## From Bach to Prokofiev— The Art of Sviatoslav Richter

by Ray Ericson

IF American audiences never hear Sviatoslav Richter in person—and it seems possible they may not—they cannot be denied the pleasure of his recordings. Although restrictions imposed by his government have prevented his appearing outside the Iron Curtain countries and China, his reputation as the best of the Soviet pianists reached the Western world even before the first Richter discs. The earliest of these were sonically too poor to give much idea of his abilities, but more recent issues have established both his phenomenal virtuosity and, in certain instances, his remarkable artistry. Now, with the release of a quartet of decently engineered discs including concertos by Bach, Mozart, Schumann, Rachmaninoff, and Prokofiev, we are given a comprehensive view of his playing. The view is fine.

To hear the works on these four discs in

chronological order is to watch music grow. Richter keeps each piece in historical focus not so much by intellectual analysis of style (although this is present) as by letting the notes speak through his sovereign technique. Thus, there is an element of emotional reserve in much of the playing, a disinclination, which will perhaps disappoint some listeners, to probe for profound or mystical meanings. The performances shine with light and clarity, are precisely and elegantly phrased, gleaming in tone; and they have a momentum that is almost serene because no technical difficulties will stop the orderly succession of notes however fast the tempo. There are no excesses, no strains. In its basic lucidity and poise and sense of proportion, the playing recalls that of Gieseking and Lipatti.

Richter's style thus enables him to play

the whole range of piano composition with comparable success. For if he has one pervasive attitude towards music—essentially lyrical—the results are still different. With its superbly balanced voices, even pulse, and attention to note values, the Bach concerto does not sound like any of the later works. Richter does not try to imitate a harpsichord except in maintaining given levels of dynamics; he even pedals slightly to give roundness and color to the piano tone. But individual notes sound with just as much distinctness as plucked tones, and this despite some wonderfully brisk tempos. The slow movement of the Bach has a contained expressivity that blossoms in the Mozart. The phrasing in the K.466 concerto has more nuance, but remains classically cool in its precise statement, and the fast movements are less vigorous than those in the Bach.



Richter's Schumann grows in warmth of tone and color of phrase, but the concerto remains lyrical in concept and is in no sense big in performance. Like the concerto, the lovely, if neglected, Introduction and Allegro and Novelette are filled with ravishing cantilenas. The Toccata, too, is played for its musical values, with the happiest results. With his astonishing facility, Richter tosses off this work as if it were a light encore, not one of the most difficult of piano pieces. (He even makes the repeat of the first section.) There is no flagging in his tempos, only an easy rubato now and then for expressiveness. The performance could not be less earthbound and is truly extraordinary.

Oddly enough, it is in the romantic music of Rachmaninoff that Richter here seems least satisfying. As in the Tchaikovsky First Concerto, recently released in this country in an atrociously engineered version, so in the Rachmaninoff Second the pianist seems to strive for a large-scale, emotionally charged effect. Slow tempos are very slow, fast tempos very fast; there are curious rubatos within marching rhythms; there are disproportionately heavy bass accents, awkward shifts in tempo. Perhaps this is just a style in which a pianist of such fastidious taste is uncomfortable. Needless to say, there is much very brilliant, exciting playing throughout the concerto. The preludes, moreover, in their shorter compass, hold their shape although given a similar freedom of treatment. Op. 23, No. 4, in particular, has a remarkably sustained arch of sound.

As Gieseking was to Debussy and Ravel, so Richter is to Prokofiev. I can imagine no

better performances of the First and Fifth Concertos. In the ebullient and entertaining First Concerto, Richter's playing is crisp, glittering, all air and sparkle. If he lavishes his beautiful tone on the slow movement, he does so without sentimentalizing it. In the highly original Fifth Concerto, the pianist's fingers fly all over the piano, yet no note has a trace of ugliness or of haste. He suggests the dry quality of the music when he should, but listen for the sprays of tone in the fourth movement!

Sonic quality varies slightly from disc to disc in this collection. In general, it is satisfactory, with too much resonance clouding a tone or two. The sharp clarity of the best recordings is missing, but surfaces are quiet. I found the monophonic versions of the Mozart and Schumann works more cohesive in body than on the stereo editions, but the intricate Prokofiev Fifth profited from the spread-out sound of stereo. Like the engineering, the orchestral playing does nicely, without being noticeably suave in tone. Witold Rowicki especially deserves credit for conducting the Prokofiev Fifth Concerto with great verve.

**BACH:** *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1, in D minor, S. 1052*

†**Prokofiev:** *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1, in D flat, Op. 10*

Sviatoslav Richter, piano; Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, Václav Talich, cond. (in the Bach); Prague Symphony Orchestra, Karel Ancerl, cond. (in the Prokofiev).

• ARTIA ALP 123. LP. \$4.98.

**MOZART:** *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 20, in D minor, K. 466*

†**Prokofiev:** *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 5, in G, Op. 55*

Sviatoslav Richter, piano; Warsaw National Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra, Stanislaw Wislocki, cond. (in the Mozart), Witold Rowicki, cond. (in the Prokofiev).

• DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 18595. LP. \$5.98.

• • DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138075. SD. \$6.98.

**SCHUMANN:** *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, in A minor, Op. 54; Introduction and Allegro for Piano and Orchestra, in G, Op. 92; Novelette in F, Op. 21, No. 1; Toccata in C, Op. 7*

Sviatoslav Richter, piano; Warsaw National Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra, Witold Rowicki, cond. (in the Concerto), Stanislaw Wislocki, cond. (in Introduction and Allegro).

• DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 18597. LP. \$5.98.

• • DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138077. SD. \$6.98.

**RACHMANINOFF:** *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 2, in D minor, Op. 18; Preludes, Op. 23: No. 2, in B flat; No. 4, in D; No. 5, in G minor; No. 7, in C minor; Op. 32: No. 1, in C; No. 2, in B flat minor*

Sviatoslav Richter, piano; Warsaw Philharmonic Orchestra, Stanislaw Wislocki, cond.

• • DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON DGS 712026. SD. \$6.98.



Edward Leinbach (1823-1901).

## Out of Our Own Heritage . . .

### Music of the American Moravians

by Nathan Broder

WHEN the Rev. John Wesley sailed for America in 1735 to preach the gospel in the colonies, he was much struck by the hymn singing of a group of Germans on board the ship. Members of a small Protestant sect that had originated in Bohemia and Moravia, these immigrants were consequently called Moravians, although most of the adherents of the sect who came to America seem to have been Germans. Wesley was so deeply impressed by the Moravian hymns that he began to write hymns for the new denomination he was establishing—Meth-

odism. But it was not only in hymns that the Moravians excelled. They brought to their settlements in Pennsylvania (where they founded the city of Bethlehem) and North Carolina a highly developed musical culture. They formed chamber music groups and even orchestral ensembles, which played the best European music of the time, such as the symphonies of Haydn or the quartets of Mozart. And when they ran short of material, musicians among them wrote new music.

This remarkable musical activity in a few

villages of eighteenth-century America remained practically unknown until a few years ago, when scholars began digging into manuscript collections found in Moravian archives and publishing their findings. Among the discoveries, for example, were six attractive string quintets—probably among the earliest chamber works written in America—composed in 1789 by John Frederick Peter, the most eminent of the Moravian composers (recorded on three New Record discs). Now there is a Moravian Music Foundation, which under the ener-

getic direction of Donald M. McCorkle is making headway in getting the music published, performed, and recorded.

The present selection includes two works by J. F. Peter (1746–1813), two by Johannes Herbst (1735–1812), three by John Antes (1740–1811), and one each by David Moritz Michael (1751–1827) and Edward W. Leinbach (1823–1901). Some of the pieces are arias for solo soprano (in one case solo baritone) and strings; others are for chorus (sometimes with solos) and string or larger orchestra. Nowhere else in America, it seems, was anyone writing sacred music for chorus with orchestra, and the only other music for a singer with orchestra that was being turned out here at the time was light stuff for ballad operas. All of the pieces on this disc are made with professional skill and some have considerable expressive power. I was particularly struck by the depth of feeling in Antes' aria for soprano *Go, Congrega-*

*tion, Go!* and the smooth melodic curve of the solo portion in Michael's *Hearken! Stay close to Jesus Christ*. An especially interesting piece is the arrangement, possibly by Herbst, for chorus and orchestra of an organ prelude on the great chorale *O Sacred Head, now wounded*. Despite the inevitable comparison with Bach's marvelous harmonizations of the tune in the *St. Matthew Passion*, the present setting stands firmly on its own feet. Generally speaking, the works presented here do not have the individuality or the character of the best of the cruder pieces that were being written about the same time by a Boston tanner named William Billings. But they have another quality, which is rare and precious, the quality of utter sincerity, of unquestioning faith in the efficacy of musical prayer.

This sincerity, this genuine religious fervor, has been beautifully caught in the performances. Miss Kombrink, who has

most of the solo work, reveals a clear, warm voice free alike of pallor and unctuousness. The chorus, under the experienced baton of Thor Johnson, sings not only with vibrant feeling but with considerable nuance and good balance. One wonders about the propriety, in the present context, of humming a chorale, as is done with Antes' *O deepest grief*; but this is a small point. The important thing is that this first selection of early American sacred music of the Moravians is presented in first-class fashion, including very fine sound in both versions.

#### THE UNKNOWN CENTURY OF AMERICAN CLASSICAL MUSIC (1760–1860), VOL. I: *Arias, Anthems, and Chorales of the American Moravians*

Ilona Kombrink, soprano; Amelio Estanislao, baritone; Moravian Festival Chorus and Orchestra, Thor Johnson, cond.

- COLUMBIA ML 5427. LP. \$4.98.
- ● COLUMBIA MS 6102. SD. \$5.98.

## CLASSICAL

### ALBENIZ: *Iberia* (complete); *Navarra*

Alicia de Larrocha, piano.

- COLUMBIA M2L 268. Two LP. \$9.96.

A few years ago a Spanish pianist by the name of Alicia de Larrocha brought to a recording of Granados' *Goyescas* a degree of poetry, color, and atmosphere not to be found elsewhere, particularly among competitive versions by other Spanish or Latin-American pianists. Now Miss de Larrocha performs the same service for Albéniz's masterpiece *Iberia*. This collection of twelve small tone poems (to them can be added *Navarra*, which is of the same genre) is not only difficult technically; it poses other problems as well, since the music is allabout the sights and sounds of Spain and in structural terms is loose, often overextended, and verging on monotony. An out-of-print recording by Claudio Arrau of half of *Iberia* met the technical hazards easily and stopped there. The still available disc by José Echaniz does not always cope with the technical difficulties and conveys the sensuousness of the music no more than Arrau's edition.

Miss de Larrocha evokes a whole world of colors and noises in a remarkable performance, complete in every way. In this process of evocation she takes her time, adopting more languorous tempos than some listeners may care for, but the results justify her. She can play fast enough when she wants to, and still control the thick texture of the writing, bringing out an inner melody while keeping transparent the welter of surrounding tone. But she is mostly, and properly, concerned with establishing and maintaining a mood and doing so through color and rhythm. How full and soft the tone is in the languid *Evocation*! Then in *El Puerto* she adds a little ping for quick, soft repeated notes. In the *Fête Dieu à Seville* she lets the rhythms murmur in the background or pour out in floods of rich sound; in *El Albaicín* she suggests the jangling of guitar strings; in *Lavapiés* she captures the humor in the imitated

barrel organ music. Always she handles the varied rhythms and the melodies full of little decorative turns with the ease and freedom of one to the manner born.

The piano tone seems faithfully recorded except in the top register, where the tone thins out. R.E.

### BACH: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1, in D minor, S. 1052*

#### †Prokofiev: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1, in D flat, P. 10*

Sviatoslav Richter, piano; Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, Václav Talich, cond. (in the Bach); Prague Symphony Orchestra, Karel Ancerl, cond. (in the Prokofiev).

- ARTIA ALP 123. LP. \$4.98.

For a feature review including these recordings, see page 56.

### BACH: *Motet: Jesu, meine Freude, S. 227; Cantata No. 4, Christ lag in Todesbanden*

Robert Shaw Chorale; RCA Victor Orchestra, Robert Shaw, cond.

- RCA VICTOR LM 2273. LP. \$4.98.
- ● RCA VICTOR LSC 2273. SD. \$5.98.

Shaw recorded this same pair of works in fine performances years ago on RCA Victor LM 9035, a disc that has not been available for some time. It is a pleasure to find the coupling back in the catalogue, and to report that the new performances are even better than the old. In both works we have once more the lovely tone, the pure intonation, the just balances, and the sensitive phrasing that are characteristic of the Shaw group at its best. This time, unlike the last, Shaw adds discreet instrumental support in some sections of the motet, an excellent idea. In the cantata he uses an organ as the keyboard continuo instrument throughout (instead of switching to harpsichord a couple of times, as he did in the old recording). The special character of each movement in this noble Easter cantata is beautifully realized. I know of no better performance on records of either of these works, and except for a few whiffs of preëcho in the motet, the sound in

both versions is first-rate. Both works are sung in German, and the original texts with English translations are supplied. N.B.

### BACH: *Preludes and Fugues: in D, S. 532; in A minor, S. 543; in E minor, S. 548*

Marcel Dupré, organ.

- MERCURY MG 50227. LP. \$3.98.
- ● MERCURY SR 90227. SD. \$5.98.

The organ employed here is the largest of three in St. Sulpice, a giant instrument with five manuals and 102 stops. It was built in 1781 and rebuilt, by the great Cavaillé-Coll, about a hundred years ago. M. Dupré has been organist at St. Sulpice for more than a quarter of a century, and he undoubtedly knows his magnificent instrument's every little idiosyncrasy. His choice of Bach compositions could hardly be better calculated to display the qualities of a large organ in a large church. These are monumental pieces, and they are played with grandeur. Dupré is careful to avoid whatever nineteenth-century "symphonic" stops his instrument may possess and to stick to basic colors and mixtures. While we do not hear the highly individual stops we have become accustomed to in "baroque" organs, in these big works they are not missed. The engineers have captured the power of the instrument and the spaciousness of the sound, yet not even in the most agile passages are Bach's lines blurred. N.B.

### BARBER: *Medea; Capricorn Concerto*

Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra, Howard Hanson, cond.

- MERCURY MG 50224. LP. \$3.98.
- ● MERCURY SR 90224. SD. \$4.98.

Barber is essentially a charm-composer and power is not one of his virtues, but the *Medea* theme and the demands of Martha Graham's choreography, for which it was written, conspired to bring forth a most exceptional degree of power in this score. It is probably Barber's finest dramatic work, or at least it seems so as Hanson plays it. The *Capricorn Concerto* is a vivacious,



peppery piece for flute, oboe, trumpet, and strings. The Eastman-Rochester virtuosos, and the recording virtuosos in the Mercury studios, do very well by it. A.F.

# **BARTOK: *Bluebeard's Castle***

Hertha Töpper (s), Judith; Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (b), Bluebeard; Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra, Ferenc Fricsay, cond.

● DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 18565. LP. \$5.98.

● ● DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138030. SD. \$6.98.

Bartók's only opera is an early work, composed in 1911. Because it is an early work, the professional Bartókians tend to slight it, and that is their worst mistake, for it is a masterpiece of the very finest quality and one of its composer's truly colossal achievements.

Its idiom owes much to Wagner and Musorgsky, but Bartók was one who could stand up to his predecessors and take from them without loss of individuality or force. There is also a great deal of Bartók's own idiom here—an extremely dark idiom based upon the *parlando-rubato* style of Hungarian folk music, with fateful embroideries in the clarinets after the *társgató* of the Hungarian tradition. If the climax of this opera, attained with the revelation of Bluebeard's bloody garden, sounds a little like the garden of Montsalvat on Good Friday, perhaps there is a reason for that: a blood sacrifice and an unhealing wound were involved at Montsalvat, too. At all events, this work, in one act and filling one disc in this performance, is the sort of thing that is greeted in the theatre with a long, almost unbreathing silence before the applause starts, because the audience is too deeply moved to applaud; but when the applause comes, it tears the house down.

One is tempted to applaud in one's own living room after hearing this disc. I think it is the most nearly perfect recording of voices it has ever been my pleasure to hear. Perfect vocal recording does not guarantee perfect vocal performance, however. Fischer-Dieskau, marvelous singer though he is, tends here to act too much and to sing too little; there is more for his magnificent voice to do than he apparently realizes. Töpper wobbles a lot, but she actually sings more than Fischer-Dieskau. Both build their characterizations with great intensity and power. The sound of the orchestra is superb, and Fricsay's interpretation brings out all the poetry and drama of the gorgeous score, in which there is not a superfluous note, not a bar of padding, not a line too much.

The recording, unfortunately, contains a few lines less than Bartók wrote. There have been some cuts, and the spoken prologue is omitted. The opera is sung in German, and the German text, without English translation, is given on the back of the jacket.

One reason for the great stature of this opera is that the poem is exceptionally beautiful. Béla Balázs, the librettist, treated the Bluebeard story in a strangely symbolic and extremely affecting way, and he gave it a literary texture which conditioned Bartók's musical setting. The libretto is like a folk ballad in dialogue; the ballad's stylized question-and-answer formula for the unfolding of a story here takes on monumental proportions, and the meter of the ballad,

very freely and heroically handled, underlies the music.

*Bluebeard's Castle* was recorded in Hungarian by Endre Koreh and Judith Hellwig with the New Symphony Orchestra of London, Walter Susskind conducting, and released by Bartók Records five years ago. This set—two LPs are needed—is still in the catalogue, and it compares very favorably with the new one. For one thing, Koreh sings more than Fischer-Dieskau. And the old recording is still extremely fine. A.F.

# **BARTOK: *Two Rhapsodies for Violin and Orchestra; Two Portraits, Op. 5***

Nathan Rubin, violin; Little Symphony of San Francisco, Gregory Millar, cond.

● FANTASY 5003. LP. \$4.98.

● ● FANTASY 8009. SD. \$4.98.

Bartók's two rhapsodies follow the same two-part, slow-fast form as the Hungarian rhapsodies of Liszt, and the first is otherwise like a Liszt rhapsody, with emphasis on the violin rather than the piano; it is tuneful and effective, but it is one of the most conventional of Bartók's works. The second rhapsody, although written at the same time as the first (in 1928), is far more original, commanding, and characteristically Bartókian, with its highly elaborated cantillations in the slow part and its wayward, flaming, improvised-sounding solo in the fast.

The first of the *Two Portraits* is very early Bartók, but it is genuinely magnificent. It was originally the slow movement of a violin concerto the rest of which Bartók destroyed. It is based upon a four-note motif strangely

like part of the Don Quixote theme in the tone poem by Strauss, and that is why people say it is a Straussian piece. It isn't; its silvery, restrained, yet intense and purified lyricism is pure Bartók, and superlatively lovely. The short scherzo which provides the second portrait is, unfortunately, a rather poor affair and one wishes it could be forgotten. These, incidentally, are not portraits of anybody in particular; or if they are, Bartók left no clues to his sitters.

Mr. Millar and the now defunct Little Symphony of San Francisco do an excellent job on all four pieces, and Fantasy's engineers should take a bow, but the hero of the entire disc is Nathan Rubin, the finest violin virtuoso in the San Francisco area. His performance in the rhapsodies and the first *Portrait* is superb. A.F.

# **BEETHOVEN: *Octet for Winds, in E flat, Op. 103***

†Dvořák: *Serenade in D minor, Op. 44*

Marlboro Woodwind Ensemble, Louis and Marcel Moyse, cond.

● COLUMBIA ML 5426. LP. \$4.98.

● ● COLUMBIA MS 6116. SD. \$5.98.

This disc is not going to win any prizes for spectacular recording, but those seeking pleasantly companionable music, well engineered, will find it thoroughly satisfying. Here are good tunes, attractive instrumental sonorities, and a general feeling of high spirits.

The Beethoven is actually a youthful work, properly placed about a hundred opus numbers earlier than its designation in the chronology. The same themes appear in the Op. 4 quintet, but the wind version is not just a hasty rewrite job but a fresh treatment of the material in terms of different instruments and their own resources. The Dvořák is ideal for a small ensemble, with a finale that closes in a particularly attractive swirl of horns and trills. R.C.M.

**BEETHOVEN: *Sonatas for Piano: No. 1, in F, Op. 2, No. 1; No. 8, in C minor, Op. 13 ("Pathétique"); No. 12, in A flat, Op. 26; No. 15, in D, Op. 28 ("Pastoral"); [incomplete]; No. 19, in G minor, Op. 49, No. 1; No. 20, in G, Op. 49, No. 2***

Walter Gieseking, piano.

● ANGEL 3600 B/L. Two LP. \$9.96.

About a year ago, when Angel issued four discs of Gieseking Beethoven, I concluded with regret that this was all we were to have of the complete edition of the sonatas the pianist was preparing at the time of his death. Happily I was mistaken. Tapes have been edited to add five more sonatas to the chronology and the greater part of a sixth. Possessing that last, incomplete performance—the final movement is missing—is perhaps the most graphic reminder that this, truly, is the end. (Actually an older, but complete, Gieseking recording of this sonata exists in the EMI archives and was released on French Columbia FCX 206 coupled with No. 12. There is no indication that it ever will be made available here.)

Unfortunately, this final album is only partly successful in filling the gaps in the Gieseking discography, since only two of the six sonatas (Nos. 1 & 19) are here presented

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in their initial Gieseking edition. Of the twenty-four sonatas that he recorded, twenty-three are available in the current Angel catalogue in one or more versions. (The only missing item is the Sonata No. 28, Op. 101, the single item from his prewar Columbia 78s which was not re-recorded during the long-play decade. It was not, incidentally, one of his finest recorded performances.)

In terms of popularity, the strongest element in this collection is the new Gieseking version of the *Pathétique* Sonata with greatly enhanced sonics over the earlier edition on Angel 35025. It remains one of the finest statements of this music, and one of the few to give it full stature. For me, the Op. 26 Sonata with its funeral march has associations that, in this context, are particularly saddening. Again the performance is exceptional.

Recitalists do not often play the two "easy" sonatas of Op. 49. Whenever Beethoven tells you something is easy, one is well advised to take care. Here the problem for the serious pianist is not in his fingerwork but in offering a strong performance that exploits the simplicity of the means. Gieseking is one of the few who could manage it, and these sonatas are a particular joy to possess from him—especially if you, or someone in your family, play them.

The Op. 2, No. 1 completes the series and gives us a comprehensive Gieseking edition of the young Beethoven's keyboard sonatas. And, even incomplete, this *Pastoral* is a moving performance as it progresses toward the place where the pianist's hands, with yet more to do, are stilled. R.C.M.

**BEETHOVEN: Sonatas for Violin and Piano: No. 5, in F, Op. 24 {"Spring"}; No. 9, in A, Op. 47 {"Kreutzer"}**

Henryk Szeryng, violin; Artur Rubinstein, piano.

● RCA VICTOR LM 2377. LP. \$4.98.  
● ● RCA VICTOR LSC 2377. SD. \$5.98.

This is one of the most immediately ingratiating records to come along this season. Both artists are Polish musicians of astonishing powers, and despite their differences in age and temperament, they find a common point of view in which it is Beethoven who dominates. I am much too fond of the results even to attempt to analyze them. There is room, naturally, for other approaches to this music, but that is inescapable when you have two great sonatas as universally admired as these.

Here are remarkable performances from remarkable musicians, well recorded—with the stereo worth the extra dollar. I leave the rest to you. R.C.M.

**BEETHOVEN: Symphonies: No. 5, in C minor, Op. 67; No. 8, in F, Op. 93**

Orchestre des Concerts Lamoureux, Igor Markevitch, cond.

● EPIC LC 3659. LP. \$4.98.  
● ● EPIC BC 1067. SD. \$5.98.

Both performances are excellent and contain the necessary first movement repeats. Markevitch succeeds in the very difficult task of playing these works with passion and drive and yet providing a sense of breadth comparable to that heard in the more calculated readings of the German school. As his *Eroica* of a few years ago promised, Markevitch is a Beethoven conductor of whom we can ex-



Bethany Beardslee in Berg's Five Songs.

pect interesting and impressive things.

This record must, in consequence, be regarded as musically important, but in terms of sound it is distressingly inadequate. Epic is pressing the stereo Fifth from two different masters, XXSB48697-2E and the same number with the alternate termination 2F. Given a choice, the 2E master seems the better, since its lower frequencies are more pronounced. Both in stereo and mono, however, the set has the boom sonics that come from a rumbling bass and exaggerated highs. The recording was apparently made in some vast barn of a place, and the crisp, French sound of the orchestra was muddled in a mixture of uncontrolled reverberation and misplaced efforts to secure a larger-than-life quality. I suggest you try the old AES curve for a start and judicious use of tone controls. With luck, you ought to have reasonable success with the Eighth, and this Fifth is worth hearing in any case. R.C.M.

**BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 6, in F, Op. 68 {"Pastoral"}; Prometheus Overture, Op. 43**

Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Ernest Ansermet, cond.

● ● LONDON CS 6160. SD. \$4.98.

As a performance, I am inclined to prefer the Klemperer set, but the more I hear Ansermet's account of this music, the less serious the differences in their readings of the score appear. Both are classic accounts of the music, with distinctive features. In Klemperer's version a blending of Olympian outlook with a robust human quality provides the individuality requisite for a great performance. From Ansermet's approach, it is the finely drawn line of the work that brings out its elements of symmetry and contrast.

Purely from the engineering standpoint, the London set has the best all-round sound of any version of this symphony you can buy today, and there is a bonus in a vigorous and carefully achieved performance of the *Prometheus* Overture. Listen to the bite of the timpani notes in the opening chord, and you will respect both the conductor and the company for the balance and realism of that sound. R.C.M.

**BEN-HAIM: To the Chief Musician—Se Riegger: Variations for Violin and Orchestra.**

**BERG: Five Songs, Op. 4**

†Webern: Five Movements for String Orchestra, Op. 5

†Schoenberg: Five Pieces for Orchestra, Op. 16

Bethany Beardslee, soprano (in the Berg); Columbia Symphony Orchestra, Robert Craft, cond.

● COLUMBIA ML 5428. LP. \$4.98.

● ● COLUMBIA MS 6103. SD. \$5.98.

Each of these three great Viennese is represented here with a work of young maturity. Each had taken the plunge into atonality, but the twelve-tone systematization was yet to come, and each remained clearly in the romantic-lyric line of the late nineteenth century. The result is music which today is completely "accessible" but still very daring and experimental in sound. The combination is unbeatable.

The Berg songs have never been recorded before; in fact, they were not even performed until 1953 (forty-one years after they were written) and they remain unpublished. They are short, employing aphoristically lyrical texts by Peter Altenberg—and they are unbelievably beautiful. For me, early Berg can be overheated, lush, and a trifle sweaty here, however, everything is perfectly and superbly chiseled, subtle to the finest hair's breadth of expression, achieving a catastrophic intensity of understatement of which only a great master is capable. Part of the overwhelming effect of the songs is, of course, to be credited to the performers. Miss Beardslee has made several recordings of modern song cycles, but none better than this.

The Webern is a string orchestra version of the famous Five Movements for String Quartet. This version has not been recorded before; it sounds a little like chunks of *Verklärte Nacht* with wrong notes, but enough wrong notes to give the score its own stature; and, as is always the case with Webern, the handling of the medium is incredible. The term *Klangfarbenmelodie* had not been invented in 1909, when Webern composed the first version of this work, but in it he went far towards making that word necessary; in rescoring for string orchestra the effects are, of course, heavier, but there are more of them and, according to Craft, they are more securely brought off.

One scarcely knows what to say about the Schoenberg. It is one of the key masterpieces of modern orchestral literature, is by no means little known, and has been recorded several times before. Craft seems especially to emphasize its ruminative, melancholy "soulful" aspects. Perhaps this is official, for Craft studied with Schoenberg himself. At all events, his interpretation is completely convincing and all of his recordings are extremely fine. A.F.

**BERLIOZ: Damnation de Faust**

Consuelo Rubio (ms), Marguerite; Richard Verreau (t), Faust; Michel Roux (b), Méphisto; Pierre Mollet (bs), Brander. Choeur Enfants Radio-Television Française; Choral Elisabeth Brasseur; Orchestre des Concerts Lamoureux, Igor Markevitch, cond.

● DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 18599/600 LPM. Two LP. \$11.96.



*Damnation of Faust* is one of the works that could have been written with stereo in mind, and we are fortunate that the first stereo recording of the work has been engineered with such care and imagination by DGG. We are also fortunate in that the performance is an exciting one, better in some ways than RCA Victor's set under Munch. Markevitch is tremendously incisive, managing to underline all the color of this glowing score while never losing track of the design. There is no hint of the episodic in this treatment, for all its attention to detail, and the intricate ensembles are never in danger of becoming scrambled.

DGG's sound can hardly be too highly praised. There is not much "stage effect" (for which there would be little precedent, since the work is hardly ever done in the theatre), but there is striking clarity, richness, and depth. Although the monophonic version is excellent, the superiority of stereo is evident at a dozen points; it is mirrored in small changes (as in the first hint of the 6/8 rhythm heralding the Peasants' Chorus in the first scene, or the initial fragments of the *Rakoczy* March on the same page—"distant rumors . . . disturbing the calm of the pastoral scene," just as Berlioz indicated); and it is evident in the climaxes, such as the deep-throated Easter hymn just before Mephisto's first appearance. For all the wide range of the sound, there is never the slightest distortion; this is a really outstanding technical achievement. The *Lamoureux* Orchestra plays brilliantly, and the *Brasseur* chorus is just as good—accurate and alive. (Among the latter's achievements is a very broad, very funny version of the *Amen* fugue, in which the tenors do some wonderfully scrawny yelling.)

The best solo singing comes from Richard Verreau, remembered as a promising Wilhelm Meister at the City Center a few seasons back. He has a firm, round voice which he handles easily, plus a grasp of the style and considerable musical understanding. Michel Roux must make do with a voice that is limited in range, volume, and color. But, while his interpretation sounds too intimately scaled to carry in a large theatre, it comes over well on discs. He is insinuatingly, almost delicately, malevolent, and does not let many dramatic opportunities go by. Rubio is on a lower level as interpreter and stylist—she simply does not bring enough point to her singing—but is certainly adequate vocally.

The accompanying booklet contains the text in French, German, and English, with notes by Georges Auric. C.L.O.

**BOULANGER:** *Du Fond de l'abîme; Psaume 24; Psaume 129; Vieille prière Boudhique; Pie Jesu*

Oralia Dominguez, contralto; Chorale Elisabeth Brasseur; *Orchestre des Concerts Lamoureux*, Igor Markevitch, cond.

● EVEREST LPBR 6059. LP. \$4.40.  
● ● EVEREST SDBR 3059. SD. \$4.40.

Lili Boulanger died in 1918 at the age of twenty-four. Historians of music speak of her in terms of high respect, but few of her works have gotten into general circulation, and this is her first recording. The five com-

positions here (*Du Fond de l'abîme*, a cantata for contralto solo, chorus, and orchestra fills one side) are of their period, but they are very beautiful, and they confirm the Boulanger legend. They display a strong interest in modal harmony and Debussyan orchestration. Melodic lines are superbly spun, structures are clear and firm. The style as a whole stands just between *Le Martyre de Saint Sébastien* and the sacred music of Poulenc. The *Vieille prière Boudhique* employs pentatonic and whole-tone scales in a delightfully "Oriental" fashion.

The performance and recording, which have the blessing of Mlle. Boulanger's famous sister Nadia, seem to be beyond reproach. The jacket promises notes on Lili Boulanger and her music inside the sleeve, but no such notes were found with the review copy. I hope they have not forgotten to provide the text, in French and in English translation. A.F.

**BRAHMS:** *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1, in D minor, Op. 15*

Julius Katchen, piano; London Symphony Orchestra, Pierre Monteux, cond.

● ● LONDON CS 6151. SD. \$5.98.

Both youthful soloist and venerable conductor display here their firm grasp of the Brahms style. Theirs is a noble and deeply thoughtful interpretation. Whereas some pianists have a tendency to pound in certain passages, Katchen never forces; he always allows the piano to sing, often a difficult feat in this large-scale, big-lined work. The accent on lyricism results in a finale that is slightly gentler and slower than usual, yet it is more than adequately forceful.

The piano could have had a bit more presence in the recording; it seems to be partly buried somewhere in the middle of the orchestra. True, this is really a symphony for orchestra with piano, but the keyboard instrument is a prominent soloist. The stereo sound, as a whole, is not particularly directional, but is well distributed and has plenty of depth.

There is more vivacity and rhythmic drive in the Epic recording by Leon Fleisher with George Szell and the Cleveland Orchestra, issued a little more than a year ago. The piano also stands out a little more prominently. But the performance, as a whole, lacks some of the lyrical warmth to be found in the Katchen-Monteux collaboration. P.A.

**BRAHMS:** *Hungarian Dances: Nos. 1, 3, 5-6, 17-21*

†Dvořák: *Slavonic Rhapsody, No. 3, in A flat, Op. 45; Scherzo capriccioso, Op. 66*

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Rafael Kubelik, cond.

● ● EMI-CAPITOL SG 7209. SD. \$5.98.

**BRAHMS:** *Hungarian Dances: Nos. 1, 3, 5-6, 17-20*

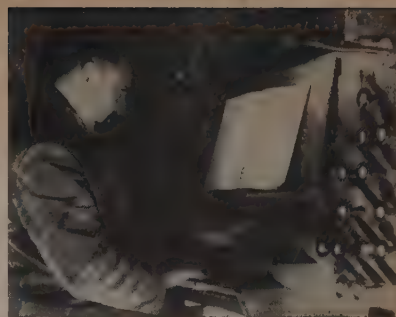
†Dvořák: *Slavonic Dances: Nos. 1, 3, 7, 10, 16*

Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan, cond.

● DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 18610. LP. \$5.98.

● ● DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138080. SD. \$6.98.

Comparison of the Capitol and Deutsche



Viderø: Danish works on a Danish organ.

Grammophon discs will show that the former offers a bit more music for the money—the Brahms *Hungarian Dance* No. 21, along with the two fine Dvořák concert pieces. It is in the Dvořák music that both conductors excel; their Brahms is inclined to be just the least bit routine, though Von Karajan invests the *Hungarian Dances* with a trifle more fire than Kubelik and employs more of the requisite rubato effects. The real gems here, however, are Kubelik's idiomatic traversal of the Dvořák *Slavonic Rhapsody* and *Scherzo capriccioso*—high-spirited performances, cleanly executed. Capitol's reproduction is marked by more noticeable separation, though Deutsche Grammophon's is full and rich in both the single- and dual-channel editions. P.A.

**BUXTEHUDE:** *Organ Works, Vol. 2*

Finn Viderø, organ.

● WASHINGTON WR 422. LP. \$4.98.

The combination of a Danish organist playing on a Danish organ works by this composer born in Denmark is not a new one—it was represented on a Haydn Society disc issued last year—but it is, in this case especially, an effective one. Viderø is of course completely at home in this music. He plays on a recently built Frobenius organ in St. John's Church at Vejle. His tempos are lively, his registrations varied, his rhythm is steady, his playing of the improvisationlike sections fanciful. The disc contains the Prelude, Fugue, and Chaconne in C major, the Toccata in F major (Hedar Vol. II, No. 17), the Canzona in D minor, the Prelude and Fugue in E minor (Hedar Vol. II, No. 9), two chorale preludes, and the Fantasia on *Nun freut euch*. Good recording. N.B.

**CHOPIN:** *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1, in E minor, Op. 11; Krakowiak (Rondo), Op. 14*

Stefan Askenase, piano; Hague Residentie Orchester, Willem van Otterloo, cond.

● DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 18605. LP. \$5.98.

● ● DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138085. SD. \$6.98.

I was partial to Horszowski's deleted version of this concerto because of its grace and directness. Stefan Askenase plays in the traditional salon style, but his subtle coloration and judicious feeling for rubato completely avoid the insipidity which mars so many a Chopin performance. This is a tender, poetic account of the music with a delicate shimmer instead of efficient glitter. Askenase, born in 1896 and a reputed Chopin specialist, studied with Theodor



*Dvořák: a Requiem of consolation.*

Pollak and Emil von Sauer; the fastidious craftsmanship, sensitivity, and quiet clarification of his playing reflect this heritage. Van Otterloo and his orchestra are in complete accord with the pianist's intimate, unruffled approach. As a further pleasure of this recording, the suavely played tutti are uncut. The delightful *Krakowiak* receives a performance akin to that of the concerto; it has a splendid freshness.

DGG's sound is truly astonishing in both versions. The mono is perhaps mellower but the stereo pressing has slightly more vividness and detail. H.G.

#### DVORAK: *Requiem*, Op. 89

Maria Stader, soprano; Sieglinde Wagner, contralto; Ernst Häfner, tenor; Kim Borg, bass; Czech Sängerkor; Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, Karel Ancerl, cond.

• DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 18547/8. Two LP. \$11.96.

• • DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138026/27. Two SD. \$13.96.

Listening to this important first recording of a beautiful and deeply moving choral masterpiece, one realizes that, in neglecting such stunning creations as this and the *Stabat Mater*, we are being deprived of some of Dvořák's greatest music. Most of the world's great Requiems have been inspired by some tragic experience in their composers' lives. Not so this one. When he wrote it, Dvořák was happy, healthy, and at the height of his fame. But not only the circumstances of its composition but also its style make this Requiem different from most others. It is a long work, in thirteen sections, but only occasionally does it rise to great dramatic heights. This is music more of consolation than of grief; as such, it is perhaps closest in spirit to the Fauré Requiem.

The performance it receives here is an authoritative, devoted, and highly polished one, completely worthy of the noble score. The singing of the quartet of soloists is almost always of a high order, though Kim Borg deserves a special word of praise for the consistent beauty and warm resonance of his vocalism. The chorus is exceptionally well disciplined, and the orchestra plays with fine tonal sheen.

The resonant hall where the recording was

made lends impressive depth to the sound, but it also renders the choral passages somewhat indistinct at times. This results in a degree of muddiness in the monophonic edition; in stereo, the wider spread of the voices makes for greater clarity. The directional effect is particularly good as it applies to the chorus and to the vocal soloists, the latter spread across the entire front of the stage. In addition, the disc surfaces are absolutely silent. All this helps to create a realistic, concertlike illusion that adds immeasurably to the enjoyment of this immensely attractive music. P.A.

DVORAK: *Serenade in D minor*, Op. 44—  
See Beethoven: *Octet for Winds*, in *E flat*, Op. 103.

DVORAK: *Slavonic Dances*: Nos. 1, 3, 7, 10, 16—See Brahms: *Hungarian Dances*.

DVORAK: *Slavonic Rhapsody*, No. 3, in *A flat*, Op. 45; *Scherzo capriccioso*, Op. 66—See Brahms: *Hungarian Dances*.

DVORAK: *Symphony No. 5*, in *E minor*, Op. 95 ("From the New World")

Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, Václav Talich, cond.

• PARLIAMENT PLP 101. LP. \$1.98.

In the old days, the RCA Victor catalogue contained 78-rpm recordings of three or four of the Dvořák symphonies by Václav Talich and the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra. Each of these was a masterpiece of interpretative insight. Evidently, these same artists remade at least one of these symphonies for Supraphon. Since Parliament is now engaged in reissuing these Supraphon discs in this country at a budget price, it is fervently to be hoped that they will make available all the Dvořák recordings made under Talich's direction. The present one is notable for its freshness and dignity, with sound that is most acceptable. P.A.

EGGE: *Symphony No. 3*  
†Harris: *Kentucky Spring*

Louisville Orchestra, Robert Whitney, cond.

• LOUISVILLE LOU 602. LP. Available on special order only.

The symphony by the Norwegian composer Klaus Egge is an extremely attractive work, with the aggressiveness, grit, punch, and largeness of line that mark the true symphony and justify the use of the term. Roy Harris' *Kentucky Spring*, on the other side, is precisely the opposite. It is as gentle, relaxed, witty, and delicate a piece as the contemporary American repertoire affords. It is not the sort of work with which one ordinarily associates Harris' name, but there it is. And very well played and recorded, to boot. A.F.

ENESCO: *Octet for Strings*, in *C*, Op. 7

String Ensemble of the Rumanian Symphony Orchestra, Constantin Silvestri, cond.

• ARTIA ALP 119. LP. \$4.98.

A somewhat longish but pleasantly Brahmsian piece, vividly performed, poorly recorded. A.F.

#### FRANCK: *Organ Works*

Pierre Cochereau, organ.

• OMEGA OML 1045. LP. \$3.98.

• • OMEGA OSL 45. SD. \$3.98.

Labeled "César Franck: Complete Organ Works, Volume 1," this disc gives promise that eventually we shall have modern replacements for the generally excellent series by Clarence Watters, once available on Classic. Included in the present release are the *Trois Pièces pour Grande Orgue*, Franck's contribution to the dedication of the Cavaillé-Coll organ at the Trocadero in 1878, and eight excerpts from the eighty-nine pieces that comprise the two books of *L'Organiste*, works Franck originally composed for the harmonium in 1889-90. Of the *Trois Pièces*, the *Fantaisie* and *Pièce Héroïque* are conceived on the grand scale; the *Cantabile* is simpler and more intimate. So are the shorter, less interesting pieces from *L'Organiste*.

Omega has wisely chosen to record this music on a Cavaillé-Coll instrument, one such as Franck himself played. Its tone is warm, full, and romantic, and Cochereau is obviously an artist sympathetic to his assignment. The *Fantaisie* has breadth and grandeur; the *Cantabile* and pieces from *L'Organiste* are registered and delivered without fuss or pomp. Only the *Pièce Héroïque* suffers slightly from too many variations in tempo.

The recorded sound is a joy, either in the full-throated monophonic or the well-spread-out stereo version. The tonal range is amazingly wide, with 32- and 4-foot stops emerging with equal clarity and absence of distortion at all volume levels—and this with about a four-second reverberation period in Notre Dame. The microphone placement was evidently fairly close, as it is often possible to hear the air escaping from a pipe as it speaks.

This is a disc of such excellence that I am awaiting its sequel impatiently. P.A.

GILBERT and SULLIVAN: *H.M.S. Pinafore* (or *The Lass That Loved a Sailor*)

Jean Hindmarsh (s), Josephine; Joyce Wright (c), Hebe; Gillian Knight (c), Little Buttercup; John Reed (b), Sir Joseph Porter; Jeffrey Skitch (b), Captain Corcoran; Thomas Round (t), Ralph Rackstraw; Donald Adams (bs), Dick Deadeye. D'Oyly Carte Opera Chorus, New Symphony Orchestra, Isidore Godfrey, cond.

• • LONDON OSA 1209. Two SD. \$11.96.

Gilbert's dialogue for the Savoy operas entered the public domain in January 1960, and London has been quick to take advantage of the occasion with this brand-new and complete recording of *H. M. S. Pinafore*. Doubtless the remainder of the Savoy repertoire will be newly recorded in similar fashion. The sharp Gilbertian gibes which sound so effective and amusing in actual performance seem to me to be far less pungent when heard on records. Perhaps this may, in part, be because the singers in the cast, who, I assume, also handle the spoken word, do not appear to savor or thrust home the point of their lines.

The vocal performance itself is perhaps more notable for the excellence of its teamwork than for the outstanding contribution

*Continued on page 64*



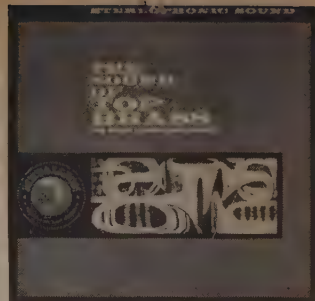
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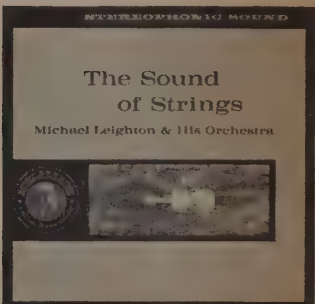
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of any one artist. Of course, this has always been the aim of the company, who deprecate the star system, and it seems to me to have been more successfully achieved here than in any other recent D'Oyly Carte recording. In the past I have often found Isidore Godfrey's direction of this work something less than inspired, but this time Mr. Godfrey is really on his toes, directing a brisk performance that consistently sparkles. The New Symphony Orchestra appears to have caught some of the conductor's new-found enthusiasm for the score and responds with a quite brilliant performance.

The London stereo sound has the usual opulent glow one associates with all this company's opera recordings. There does not appear to have been any great attempt to suggest a stage performance, but some movement is evident in the stereo recording. London includes an excellent booklet containing the libretto, though by some oversight it omits the artists involved. J.F.I.

#### GLUCK: *Der betrogene Kadi*

Ruth Nixa (s), Fatime; Zdenka Djeri (s), Zelmire; Elisabeth Schönauer (s), Omega; Richard van Vrooman (t), Nuradin; Wladimir Smid-Kowar (b), Omar; Hans von Welz (bs), Kadi. Camerata Academica des Salzburger Mozarteums, Bernhard Paumgartner, cond.

- EPIC LC 3645. LP. \$4.98.
- ● EPIC BC 1062. SD. \$5.98.

The jacket notes for this release contain the complete German and English text, but no historical material at all. *Der betrogene Kadi* (originally *Le Cadi dupé*) is an *opéra-bouffe* written for Vienna in 1761; in fact, it seems to have been the last of Gluck's pre-reform operas. The plot, much too silly to recount in any detail, concerns a trick played on the Kadi by a young lady named Zelmire. The duplicity involves marrying the fellow to an ugly woman rather than to the alluring morsel he thinks he's getting. When the monster lifts her veil—well, you'll hardly be able to contain yourself.

Despite the abysmal libretto, Gluck turned out an enchanting little piece. Much of it is quite Mozartean, and one duet really seems to bridge a century into the world of Viennese operetta. Paumgartner leads a performance of great vivacity and precision; and while there are no earth-shaking voices here, the singers perform their functions in a pleasant spirit—the best all-round portrayal being that of Zdenka Djeri, who is an enticing Zelmire. The total effect is diverting, and though the sound is occasionally cavernous (less so in the monophonic version), it is kind to the orchestra, and keeps the performance in balance. C.L.O.

#### HANDEL: *Utrecht Te Deum and Jubilate*; *Coronation Anthem: No. 1, Zadok the Priest*

Ilse Wolf, soprano; Helen Watts, contralto; Wilfred Brown, Edgar Fleet, tenors; Thomas Hemsley, bass; Geraint Jones Singers and Orchestra, Geraint Jones, cond.

- ARCHIVE 3133. LP. \$5.98.
- ● ARCHIVE 73133. SD. \$6.98.

I must confess that the *Utrecht Te Deum*, a fairly early work, has never struck me as one of Handel's masterpieces. I find it, in fact, long, anemic, and dull. The *Jubilate*

contains more red blood corpuscles, but *Zadok the Priest* is on an altogether different plane—it is topnotch Handel. According to the notes, this anthem has been performed at the coronation of every British monarch from George II in 1727 (for which occasion it was written) to Elizabeth II in 1953. Nothing could be more appropriate: this short work (it lasts about six minutes) combines grandeur and power with jubilation. Chorus and orchestra are efficient, soloists acceptable (the women more so than the men), and sound very good. N.B.

#### HANDEL: *Water Music: Suite. Royal Fireworks: Suite. Overture in D minor. Samson: Overture*

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Sir Malcolm Sargent, cond.

- CAPITOL G 7202. LP. \$4.98.
- ● CAPITOL SG 7202. SD. \$5.98.

Except for some dawdling in the Air of the *Water Music* and the Largo of the *Fireworks Suite*, these are topnotch performances, beautifully recorded. They should consequently give much pleasure to those many listeners who prefer their Handel in a Harty version rather than in a pure one. I can understand such a preference, without sharing it. But I cannot find a kind word to say about the gross distortion inflicted upon Handel by Elgar in the Overture in D minor, which is as inflated as any Bach-Respighi or -Ghedini transcription. Handel has been somewhat more tastefully served in Sargent's transcription of the Overture to the oratorio *Samson*. N.B.

#### HARRIS: *Kentucky Spring*—See Egge: *Symphony No. 3*.

#### HAYDN: *Symphony No. 45, in F sharp minor ("Farewell")*—See Mozart: *Symphony No. 36, in C, K. 425 ("Linz")*.

#### JOSQUIN DES PREZ: *Missa Una Masque de Biscaya*

Renaissance Chorus of New York, Harold Brown, cond.

- BAROQUE 9002. LP. \$4.95.

The Renaissance Chorus of New York is a group of over fifty students from various high schools and colleges that was founded and trained by its conductor, Harold Brown. That they have been well trained is evident here. In this unaccompanied music, where each of the four parts usually lives a life of its own and where there are no regularly recurring accents, it takes a skillful and keener director to keep everything flowing smoothly and everybody on pitch. Mr. Brown is also to be congratulated for avoiding the usual batch of madrigals and such, and for giving us instead another lovely Mass to add to the lonely pair by the great Josquin now in the domestic record catalogues. It is to be hoped that in future recordings the chorus will project the words more clearly and that the recorded sound will have more presence. N.B.

#### KABALEVSKY: *The Comedians, Op. 26* †Khachaturian: *Masquerade Suite*

RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra, Kyril Kondrashin, cond.

- RCA VICTOR LM 2398. LP. \$4.98.
- ● RCA VICTOR LSC 2398. SD. \$5.98.

*The Comedians* is a nice, sec, lively ballet-type score, ideal for pop concerts. The *Masquerade Suite* is, like all of Khachaturian, hopelessly soggy and vulgar. Both works are beautifully played and superlatively well recorded. A.B.

#### KHACHATURIAN: *Masquerade Suite*—See Kabalevsky: *The Comedians, Op. 26*.

#### LADERMAN: *Quartet for Strings, No. 1*—See Overton: *Quartet for Strings, No. 2*.

#### LAYTON: *Quartet for Strings, in Two Movements*

†Moevs: *Sonata per pianoforte*

Claremont String Quartet (in the Layton) Joseph Bloch, piano (in the Moevs).

- COMPOSERS RECORDINGS CRI 136. LP. \$5.95.

This is the fifth in the series of Composer releases sponsored by the American Academy of Arts and Letters and the National Institute of Arts and Letters. Two more completely opposed compositions can scarcely be imagined. The quartet by Billy Jim Layton is highly rhapsodic, free and improvised in feeling, with a tremendous urgency and pressure behind it, and an immensely rich store of ideas stumbling over each other in a rush for utterance. The sonata by Moevs, on the other hand, plotted with the utmost clarity; it is a flawless, transparent musical fabric much beholden to Beethoven, full of vigor and life, all very carefully disciplined. Both works are immensely attractive; if I were getting together a package of records to make propaganda for American music, American performers, and American engineering of sound, this one would go close to the top of the pile. A.B.

#### LEONCAVALLO: *Pagliacci* (excerpts) †Puccini: *La Bohème* (excerpts)

Emma Luart, Ninon Vallin, Lily Pons, sopranos; Conchita Supervia, mezzo-soprano; Micheletti, Villabella, Charles Friant, Di Mazzei, tenors; Edouard Rouard, Roger Bourdin, baritones; Pierre Dupré, bass. Orchestra, Gustave Cloëz, cond.

- ODEON ORX 112. LP. \$5.95.

These selections do not maintain an extraordinary level, but they offer several interesting cuts. Micheletti sings well in both the "*Vesti la giubba*" and *Harlequin Serenade*, shaping Canio's aria with particular sensitivity. Bourdin is a much above-average Silvio, and Friant offers some sharp declamation (if not much singing) in "*U tal gioco*." Rouard is not in his best element. The *Bohème* side features excellent work in the Act I arias by Villabella and Vallin (these recordings are available on the recent Pathé collection of *Bohème* excerpts, too). Villabella and Bourdin do the Act IV duet nicely, and Dupré is adequate for the Coeur de Lion Song. Pons's voice sounds fresh and full in the Act I duet, but there are pitch difficulties—probably the fault of the recording.

Continued on page 66





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—and Di Mazzei is a poor partner. For all of Supervia's flair for the music, I don't find her tremulous *Valse de Musette* very appealing. The sound is in general decent enough, considering the sources, but Michelletti's excerpts are, unfortunately, the worst of the lot, and only by deadening the sound can one remove the rattle on the higher pitches. C.L.O.

**LISZT: *Concertos for Piano and Orchestra: No. 1, in E flat; No. 2, in A. Etude No. 2, in E flat* ["Paganini"]. *Légende No. 2* ["St. François de Paule marchant sur les flots"]**

Tamas Vásáry, piano; Bamberg Symphony, Felix Prohaska, cond.

● DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 18589. LP. \$5.98.

● ● DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138055. SD. \$6.98.

Although I do not profess to have heard every recorded version of these concertos, I suspect that this is undoubtedly one of the finest. Artistry of this sort is always rare.

Tamas Vásáry, a young Hungarian pianist new to me, plays with a pointillistic, highly colored touch, brilliantly accurate timing, and patrician sense of style. His playing is reminiscent of Gieseking's in its fastidiousness and lack of meaningless rhetoric. The E flat Concerto as played here is pure enchantment, and the other works are scarcely inferior. This is Liszt playing of genuine excitement instead of smuggy bravado. How well Mr. Vásáry fares in other music remains to be seen, but his Liszt is truly remarkable. The Bamberg Symphony's work here transcends anything I have previously heard from them.

The stereo version had a few moments of slight stridency absent from its monophonic equivalent, but its greater separation gave an added brilliance to the concertos. H.G.

**MAHLER: *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen; Kindertotenlieder***

Maureen Forrester, contralto; Boston Symphony Orchestra, Charles Munch, cond.

● RCA VICTOR LM 2371. LP. \$4.98.

● ● RCA VICTOR LSC 2371. SD. \$5.98.

This is a surprising record. Munch's Mahler is, before you hear it, an unknown quantity—and suspect. But you expect things from Forrester, whose high place among today's younger singers is justified by her work for discs.

As things turn out, Munch's accompaniment is quite the finest thing here and more than able to meet the rivalry of the other editions. (Why, then, does Munch play so little Mahler? Th's affinity is worth the cultivation.)

Uneven is the word for Forrester's performance. She has to fake the top note in the closing pages of *Ging heut' morgen über Feld*, which both Flagstad and Fischer-Dieskau manage, and elsewhere her voice lacks a well-focused tone or a firm tonal quality. Yet there is no doubt that her interpretation of these songs is quite moving. The *Kindertotenlieder*, in particular, receive a performance that is one of the few I have heard even to deserve mention in the company of the great older version by Kathleen Ferrier. Forrester brings drama and poign-

ancy to this music which I do not find equaled in the phlegmatic, but beautifully sung, Flagstad set. Mahler, especially here, is not a phlegmatic composer, and his intentions are as important as vocal prowess.

The stereo is very well recorded, indeed, one of the best Boston productions of recent months. Monophonically it remains acceptable; but if a monophonic edition is what you want, the Ferrier and Fischer-Dieskau versions are surely more attractive. R.C.M.

**MAHLER: *Symphony No. 9, in D minor***

London Symphony Orchestra, Leopold Ludwig, cond.

● EVEREST LPBR 6050-2. Two LP. \$8.80.

● ● EVEREST SDBR 3050-2. Two SD. \$8.80.

Any recording of the Mahler Ninth is an event, and the debut of the score in stereo calls for even greater than normal interest. On that count, it ought to be said right off that the engineering here (except for a bad splice midway in the final movement), is up to the usual high Everest standards, with the result that the large tonal masses characteristic of Mahler's orchestration are reproduced with a dynamic force previously unmatched. Ludwig's performance is on the fast side. It comes out nearly ten minutes shorter than the Horenstein version that, up to now, has dominated the somewhat limited field. Playing the alternative editions of the work against each other, on a purely interpretative basis I would say that Horenstein offers the most effective solution to the problems of this music—particularly those of the first movement. On the other hand, Ludwig's performance cannot be discussed in any casual fashion. Its powerful, dramatic, and propulsive characteristics are all likely to contribute to the wider popularity of this score.

In short, if you are a Mahler collector, stick with the Horenstein unless you are sure that you find Ludwig's approach congenial or his sonics justification for a change in point of view. If you are simply a collector of fine recorded music, here is your best chance to date to get to know a remarkable symphony. R.C.M.



Milhaud: conducts his Seasons.

**MENDELSSOHN: *Symphony No 4, in A, Op. 90* ["Italian"]**

†Wolff: *Italian Serenade*

†Tchaikovsky: *Capriccio italien, Op. 45*

Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, William Steinberg, cond.

● CAPITOL P 8515. LP. \$4.98.

● ● CAPITOL SP 8515. SD. \$5.98.

Impressions of Italy by three non-Italians—including one who was never there—make an interesting coupling on this disc. In the Mendelssohn, Steinberg is more interested in showing off the inherent beauty of the music than the virtuosity of his orchestra. Consequently, he stays well within the speed limit, and allows the symphony's sunny and virile qualities to shine. He even takes time to repeat the exposition of the first movement.

The charming, witty little *Italian Serenade* by Hugo Wolf first saw the light of day in a version for string quartet, and it is in that form that it is usually performed today. (Wolf's orchestration often appears overly fussy.) The solo viola, which he features prominently, stands out well enough in the monophonic recording, but in stereo it is almost lost in the shuffle—something which could have been remedied by altering the position of the microphones. The fairly live acoustics of Pittsburgh's Syria Mosque do not help the over-all clarity of the sound in this particular work. Nevertheless, Steinberg's extremely light and transparent handling of the music maintains its chamber music spirit.

In the *Capriccio italien* the same seeking after transparency causes him to slow down the music considerably in certain sections, thereby robbing it of some of its brilliance. The final tarantella, however, moves along at a good clip. The percussion instruments are reproduced with particular vividness in this work.

Taking the recording as a whole, it is completely satisfactory in mono, but there seems to be more tonal warmth in the stereo edition. A fine, spacious resonance prevails in the two-channel version, which positions the instruments naturalistically about the aural stage. P.A.

**MILHAUD: *The Seasons***

Ensemble of the Concerts Lamoureux; Darius Milhaud, cond.

● EPIC LC 3666. LP. \$4.98.

● ● EPIC BC 1069. SD. \$5.98.

This is a series of four concertinos, each quite individual in instrumentation. *Spring* is for violin and small orchestra, *Summer* for viola and a chamber ensemble, *Autumn* for two pianos and still another chamber ensemble, and *Winter* for trombone and strings. The pieces were written over a long period; *Spring* dates from 1934 and *Winter* from 1953. These opening and closing portions of the cycle are also the best. The work for violin is the typical Milhaud pastoral piece, full of lovely tunes handled in the lightest and most gracious style. The work for trombone is not long, but it is wonderfully large in conception, and is ruminative and declamatory in highly dramatic fashion. The other two concertinos fit the scheme admirably, but *Spring* and *Winter* are what one especially remembers. The soloists are Szymon Goldberg, the well-known violinist; Ernst Wallfisch, violist; Genevieve Joy and



acqueline Bonneau, duopianists; and Maurice Suzan, trombonist. The performance is excellent, and so is the recording. A.F.

**MOEVS: Sonata per pianoforte**—See Layton: *Quartet for Strings, in Two Movements*.

**MOZART: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 20, in D minor, K. 466**

**Prokofiev: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 5, in G, Op. 55**

viatoslav Richter, piano; Warsaw National Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra, Stanisław Wislocki, cond. (in the Mozart), Witold Rowicki, cond. (in the Prokofiev).

DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 18595. P. \$5.98.

• DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 38075. SD. \$6.98.

for a feature review including these recordings, see page 56.

**MOZART: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 3, in G, K. 216**—See Prokofiev: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 2, in G minor, Op. 63*.

**MOZART: Serenades: No. 13, in G, K. 525 {"Eine kleine Nachtmusik"}; No. 8, in D, K. 286. Der Schauspieldirektor: Overture. Deutsche Tänze {6}, K. 509. Two Minuets, K. 463. Divertimento No. 1, in E flat, K. 113**

amberg Symphony Orchestra, Joseph Keilberth, cond.

TELEFUNKEN TC 8032. LP. \$1.98.

The novelties here are two delightful works, K. 286 and 463, neither of which seems to be otherwise available in the domestic catalogues. K. 286 is a Serenade for four little orchestras. Such a work, of course, cries out for stereo, but Keilberth manages to distinguish among the ensembles by having Orchestra No. 2 play a little softer than No. 1, No. 3 slightly softer still, and so on—a perfectly legitimate effect here and one that works out nicely. K. 463 consists of two minuets, each of which is followed by a master group of dances in various rhythms, the whole set constituting, according to Einstein, two quadrilles. All of the pieces receive competent performances and the sound is entirely acceptable. All together, another Telefunken bargain. N.B.

**MOZART: Symphony No. 36, in C, K. 425 {"Linz"}.**

**Haydn: Symphony No. 45, in F sharp minor {"Farewell"}.**

estival Casals Orchestra, Pablo Casals, cond.

• COLUMBIA ML 5449. LP. \$4.98.

• COLUMBIA MS 6122. SD. \$5.98.

**MOZART: Symphonies: No. 36, in C, K. 425 {"Linz"}; No. 31, in D, K. 297 {"Paris"}; Les petits riens: Overture**

Orchestra of the Bavarian Radio, Ferdinand Leitner, cond.

• DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 18579. P. \$5.98.

• DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 38046. SD. \$6.98.



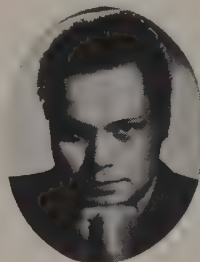
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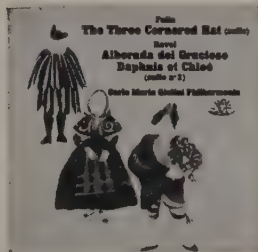


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Some of the qualities that have made Casals the greatest cellist of our time are clearly audible in these performances of his. They include a fastidiousness in the articulation of phrases that makes one think of the greatest singers, and an ability especially in slow movements to extract the utmost poetry from the music. In general, however, the conductor is not as impressive as the cellist. His slow tempos for the first and last movements of the Mozart drain the spiritedness and sparkle from the work, although it must be admitted that the magical beauty of Casals' reading of the Adagio almost compensates for the loss. This *Linz* is not, it seems to me, except for the two middle movements, on a par with Bruno Walter's; but the *Farewell* is as satisfactory a performance as any now available on records. Although these recordings were taped from actual performances, the playing is almost immaculate; a few imprecise attacks are not bothersome. The sound is good in both versions, and fanciers of the vocal efforts of conductors can now add some faint grunts and hums by Casals to their collections.

If the great Bruno Walter performance and recording of the *Linz* were not such a recent and glowing memory, Leitner's reading would probably make an even deeper impression than it does. For this is a very capable performance, agile, singing, and poetic. Leitner rather unnecessarily reinforces the basses with bassoons in one passage of the Adagio, and his interpretation of some of the grace notes in that movement is questionable, but otherwise I could hear no flaws. In the *Paris* Symphony he does not have overwhelming competition. Here the fast movements are crisp but not dry, and the Andante flows along nicely. As always when Mozart's dynamics and phrasing are carefully observed by good musicians, as they are throughout this symphony, the result is unfailing eloquence. The sound is extraordinarily clear, even more so in stereo than in mono, and perfectly balanced. N.B.

**MUSSORGSKY: *Night on the Bare Mountain***—See Tchaikovsky: *Symphony No. 2, in C minor, Op. 17* ("Little Russian").

**OVERTON: *Quartet for Strings, No. 2***  
†Laderman: *Quartet for Strings, No. 1*

Beaux-Arts String Quartet.

● COMPOSERS RECORDINGS CRI 126. LP. \$5.95.

The State Department is herewith urged to buy large quantities of this record and to distribute it throughout the world as evidence of the health, reasonableness, and clarity of American musical thought and the sound sense of the American educational system.

Hall Overton and Ezra Laderman are both young men. Neither is a celebrity. Both have been through the American musical mill. (Overton: Chicago Musical College, Juilliard, Riegger, Milhaud, Guggenheim Fellowship, Koussevitzky Foundation commission. Laderman: Brooklyn College, Columbia, Riegger, Guggenheim Fellowship, CBS commission.) Overton has been very active as a jazz pianist and arranger; Laderman seems to have missed out on that type of experience, but can offer his present fellowship at the American Academy in Rome in

fulfillment of his degree as a representative American composer.

Both composers have something to say. Overton's quartet is the more serene, melodious, and restrained; it is in the classic tradition, and most affectingly so—a beautiful work, that is bound to win friends and influence people wherever it goes. Laderman's quartet is more rugged, dissonant, and rhythmically complex than Overton's, but it, too, makes good points with the utmost economy and directness.

This record is recommended to the State Department for an additional reason: it is a disc of American music made by American performers. (Practically all the records of American orchestral music are made by orchestras in places like Tokyo, Oslo, and Omsk, because American orchestral rates are too high.) The Beaux-Arts Quartet plays extremely well, and it has been finely recorded. A.F.

**POULENC: *La Voix humaine***

Denise Duval (s), The Woman. Orchestra of Théâtre National de l'Opéra-Comique, Georges Prêtre, cond.

● RCA VICTOR LS 2385. LP. \$4.98.

● ● RCA VICTOR LSS 2385. SD. \$5.98.

For a feature review of this recording, see page 55.

**PROKOFIEV: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 2, in G minor, Op. 63***

†Mozart: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 3, in G, K. 216*

David Oistrakh, violin; Philharmonia Orchestra, Alceo Galliera, cond.

● ANGEL 35714. LP. \$4.98.

● ● ANGEL S35714. SD. \$5.98.

Oistrakh is responsible for no less than five of the seven currently available recordings of Prokofiev's First Violin Concerto, and so it is not surprising that he has eventually gotten around to the Second. He does it extremely well, but not better than Heifetz, whose recording of this work still remains its classic exposition. Oistrakh's Mozart, however, possesses a serenity that is most remarkable and is, for me, the real distinction of this disc. A.F.

**PUCCINI: *La Bohème* (excerpts)**—See Leoncavallo: *Pagliacci* (excerpts).

**PUCCINI: *Madama Butterfly***

Toti dal Monte (s), Cio-Cio-San; Vittoria Palombini (ms), Suzuki; Maria Huder (ms), Kate Pinkerton; Beniamino Gigli (t), Pinkerton; Adelio Zagonara (t), Goro; Mario Basiola (b), Sharpless; Ernesto Dominici (bs), The Bonze; Gino Conti (bs), Prince Yamadori. Chorus and Orchestra of the Rome Opera House, Oliviero de Fabritiis, cond.

● ANGEL GRB 4000. Two LP. \$11.96.

*Butterfly* is very much the leading lady's opera, and so the decision on this recording involves, first of all, the work of Toti dal Monte. Her *Butterfly* is by all odds the worst-sounding on LP (excluding one or two efforts on fly-by-night labels); it is also the most moving. As singing, it is barely endurable—shrill, edgy, thin. At times she



ands like a brassy boy soprano, at others  
e a practitioner of Oriental vocal art,  
sal and cutting. But she is an artist to the  
re, and an impassioned one. Even on  
ords, she takes her character through  
ery reaction in an utterly believable way,  
d when she arrives at last at a portrayal of  
e shattered woman of Act III, the effect is  
erpowering. Her *Butterfly* demonstrates  
e triumph of what I shall have to call the  
tist's soul over the limitations of the  
tist's physical equipment.

Gigli's "acting" is appalling, which is all  
e more regrettable in view of the fact that  
nkerton is, at best, a pretty objectionable  
character. His singing, however, apart from  
tight top note or two early in Act I, leaves  
competition at the starting gate, and his  
ulgent, liquid tone in the Love Duet and  
*Addio, fiorito asil*" compensates for every-  
ing. Basiola, a solid baritone, is not shown  
advantage as Sharpless, but is certainly  
fficient. The minor parts are all well  
ndered, particularly Adelio Zagonara's  
oro and Dominici's Zio Bonze. De Fabri-  
s, happily, conducts with vigor. Consider-  
g the recording is vintage monophonic, the  
und is very good. C.L.O.

**ACHMANINOFF:** *Concerto for Piano  
and Orchestra, No. 2, in D minor, Op. 18;*  
*Preludes: Op. 23: No. 2, in B flat; No. 4,*  
*in D; No. 5, in G minor; No. 7, in C*  
*minor; Op. 32: No. 1, in C; No. 2, in B flat*  
*minor*

viatoslav Richter, piano; Warsaw Philhar-  
monic Orchestra, Stanislaw Wislocki, cond.  
• DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON DGS 712026.  
D. \$6.98.

or a feature review including this record-  
g, see page 56.

**RAVEL:** *Gaspard de la nuit; Le Tombeau  
de Couperin*

Charles Rosen, piano.  
Epic LC 3589. LP. \$4.98.

he interpreter provides his own jacket  
otes here, and they are exceptionally lucid,  
netrating, and well-written notes, for  
hich we may be thankful. Mr. Rosen's  
ano playing is of the same quality as his  
erature, and the recording is very fine.  
A.F.

**RIEGGER:** *Variations for Violin and  
Orchestra*

Ben-Haim: *To the Chief Musician*

dney Harth, violin; Louisville Orchestra,  
Robert Whitney, cond.  
LOUISVILLE, LOU 601. LP. Available  
special order only.

he Riegger is a very strenuous and brilliant  
rtuoso piece in the twelve-tone style, and  
is superbly played by Harth, who has gone  
om the Louisville Orchestra to become  
concertmaster of the Chicago Symphony.  
he piece by Paul Ben-Haim on the other  
le is in the folkloric, Bartókian, prophetic  
in and makes a good case for the Israeli  
mposers—among the many who have re-  
ived commissions from the Louisville  
chestra. The recording in both cases is  
ceptionally fine. A.F.

Continue on page 72

**JAIME LAREDO.** Brahms: "Sonata No. 3"; Bach:  
"Partita No. 3." At 18, Jaime Laredo is regarded  
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decades. The album combines two works — one  
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ing, both magnificently realized. LSC/LM-2414.

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conducting. LSC/LM-2405.

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"Don Giovanni." André Tchaikowsky, with the  
Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Fritz Reiner  
conducting. LSC/LM-2287.

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Monophonic only. LM-2426.

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Fiedler conducting. LSC/LM-2130.

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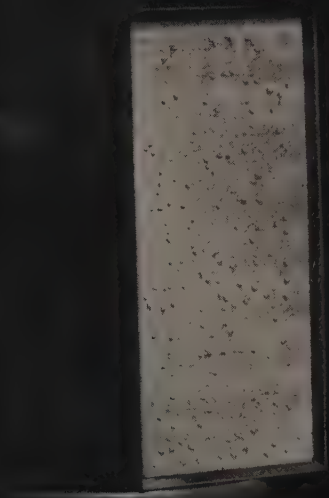
**PUCCINI:** "Tosca." Milanov, Bjoerling, Warren;  
Leinsdorf conducting. 3 LP's in Stereo, 2 LP's  
in monophonic. LSC/LM-6052.

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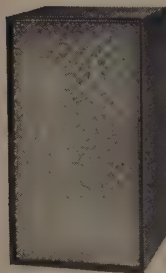
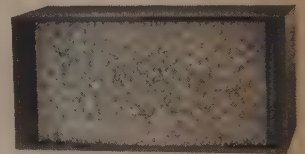
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**RIMSKY-KORSAKOV: *Scheherazade*, Op. 35**

London Symphony Orchestra, Sir Eugene Goossens, cond.

- EVEREST LPBR 6026. LP. \$4.40.
- ● EVEREST SDBR 3026. SD. \$4.40.

Philharmonia Orchestra, Lovro von Matacic, cond.

- ANGEL 35767. LP. \$4.98.
- ● ANGEL S 35767. SD. \$5.98.

Goossens gives a sound, solid interpretation of this symphonic showpiece. Though his reading is essentially along orthodox lines, he manages to whip up plenty of excitement where it is required, particularly in the Festival at Bagdad. Von Matacic is generally heavy-handed, even haphazard at times; his reading lacks character, precision, and unity of style. There are even some wrong notes, the most conspicuous of which is the first trumpet note, overblown by a whole tone at the climax of the finale. Why did Angel issue this indifferent disc barely a year after its release of the best *Scheherazade* yet—the magnificent one by Beecham?

Everest easily takes precedence over Angel in the matter of reproduction too. The former's monophonic version, however, is not all it might have been. It has little or no perspective, and sounds as if there were a microphone in front of each instrumental soloist. In fact, a soloist often appears louder and closer than an entire section. In the stereo edition, however, there is proper perspective, balance, and directionality, along with excellent clarity and definition.

Some overmodulation in Angel's mono disc may cause tracking problems; it did with one arm I tried. This also brings about a bit of distortion in the heaviest passages. Otherwise, the sound is satisfactory. It is in the two-channel version that the instrumental balance falters here. Sometimes—for example, in parts of the third movement—the percussion is almost inaudible, and the stereo effect throughout is not very marked. P.A.

**SCHNABEL: *Trio for Strings; Duodecimet***

Felix Galimir, Renee Hurtig, and Charles P. McCracken (in the Trio); Monod Ensemble, Jacques Monod, cond. (in the *Duodecimet*).  
● COLUMBIA ML 5447. LP. \$4.98.

A strange legend traveled with Artur Schnabel in the closing years of his life. It ran to the effect that, although he was a classicist of classicists in his concert repertoire, he was also the author of compositions which for dissonance, freakish originality, and general modernistic horrendousness put Schoenberg in a class with Chaminade. No one ever heard any of this music, and there was no reliable testimony to prove that anyone had ever seen it; now, nine years after Schnabel's death, some of it is issued on records, and it demonstrates that the legend was a trifle exaggerated.

The String Trio dates from 1925. In general character it was obviously influenced by the revival of late Beethoven which was so signal a feature of musical life at that time and of which Schnabel's own concert activities were a significant symptom. The work sounds a good deal like the string trios which Hindemith was writing at the same period, although it lacks Hindemith's rhythmic variety.

The *Duodecimet* was Schnabel's last work,



*Juilliard String Quartet plays Schubert.*

completed in 1950, not long before he died. Its four movements are short, pointed, very vigorous, full of polyphonic complexity and brilliant, mosaiclike color. Otherwise they are not easy to describe because the music does not adhere to any one manner; for all its emphasis on the magic number twelve in its instrumentation, it is not a serial piece, and it even has clearly tonal moments. Schnabel is said to have held any system of composition in horror, and his eclecticism leads to fascinating results here, although I am not sure that they are completely first-class results.

In hearing completely new works like these one cannot pretend to judge performance on any comparative basis, but the playing throughout the disc seems to be excellent and the recording is up to Columbia's finest standard.

A.F.

**SCHOENBERG: *Five Pieces for Orchestra*, Op. 16—See Berg: *Five Songs*, Op. 4.**

**SCHUBERT: *Quartets for Strings: No. 14, in D minor ("Tod und das Mädchen"); No. 12, in C minor ("Quartettsatz")***

Juilliard String Quartet.

- RCA VICTOR LM 2378. LP. \$4.98.
- ● RCA VICTOR LSC 2378. SD. \$5.98.

Amadeus Quartet.

- ● DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON DGS 712037. SD. \$6.98.

The Juilliard Quartet has long been one of our leading chamber music ensembles; but not since its memorable recordings of the six Bartók Quartets in the early days of LP has it turned in a performance as impressive as that on this Schubert disc. Never have I heard the theme of the *Death and the Maiden* variations played with such an otherworldly effect. The variations that follow are meaningful and often intensely moving, with every nuance carefully thought out and every balance carefully weighed. By contrast, the other three movements are full of high spirits and sparkling, virtuosic precision.

The Amadeus touch is decidedly heavier. There is plenty of vitality in the opening movement, but all the variations of the second movement are taken at a very deliberate, though not unexpressive pace, and the last two movements lack rhythmic verve and lightness of touch.

P.A.

**SCHUBERT: *Die schöne Müllerin* †Schumann: *Lieder***

Ernst Häfliger, tenor; Jacqueline Bonneau, piano.

- DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 19207/08 LP. Two LP. \$11.96.

- ● DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 136039/40 SLPEM. Two SD. \$13.96.

This splendid set should find many satisfied purchasers among Lieder devotees. Häfliger's voice has all the flexibility of the tenor *leggiere*, and yet a warm, masculine tone which is never thin or dry. It possesses wide range and a variety of colors and dynamic shades. He achieves fine identification with nearly all the songs, and in many instances lends them little emphases of a personal sort which are invariably in the frame. He never compromises for the sake of ease; the song are all in the indicated keys and at the appropriate tempos, though in such cases as Schubert's *Ungeduld* and *Mein* this involves a killing pace. Bonneau, familiar from some excellent Souzay discs, is superb. Her playing has a clarity and definition that sometimes exceed even Gerald Moore's, and she and Häfliger are consistently together in the spirit and letter of the music; this is strong, sensitive work which places her in the top rank of accompanists.

The DGG engineers have been of great help, for the sound is rich and balanced and the surfaces utterly silent. The second record is quite justified, not only because the performers are able to take exactly the pace they choose, but because the movement of the whole cycle, including the time lapses between songs, is just right for the first time on records. Besides, one gets the Schumann songs, also beautifully performed. The entire effort adds up to a communicative experience of the first order. The stereo version has just enough extra definition and roundness to make the extra outlay worthwhile. Complete German texts, but no translations or notes.

C.L.O.

**SCHUMANN: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, in A minor, Op. 54; Introduction and Allegro for Piano and Orchestra, in G, Op. 92; Novelette in F, Op. 21, No. 1; Toccata in C, Op. 7***

Sviatoslav Richter, piano; Warsaw National Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra, Witold Rowicki, cond. (in the Concerto), Stanislaw Wislocki, cond. (in Introduction and Allegro).

- DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 18597. LP. \$5.98.
- ● DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138077. SD. \$6.98.

For a feature review including this recording, see page 56.

**SCHUMANN: *Lieder*—See Schubert: *Die schöne Müllerin*.**

**SHOSTAKOVICH: *Concerto for Cello and Orchestra, Op. 107; Symphony No. 1, Op. 10***

Mstislav Rostropovich, cello (in the Concerto); Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond.

- COLUMBIA ML 5452. LP. \$4.98.
- ● COLUMBIA MS 6124. SD. \$5.98.

Shostakovich's new cello concerto is a dull and trivial piece. The symphony on the other side is not a dull or trivial piece, but it is one to which far too much attention has been paid, and this performance of it sounds a little tired.

A.F.

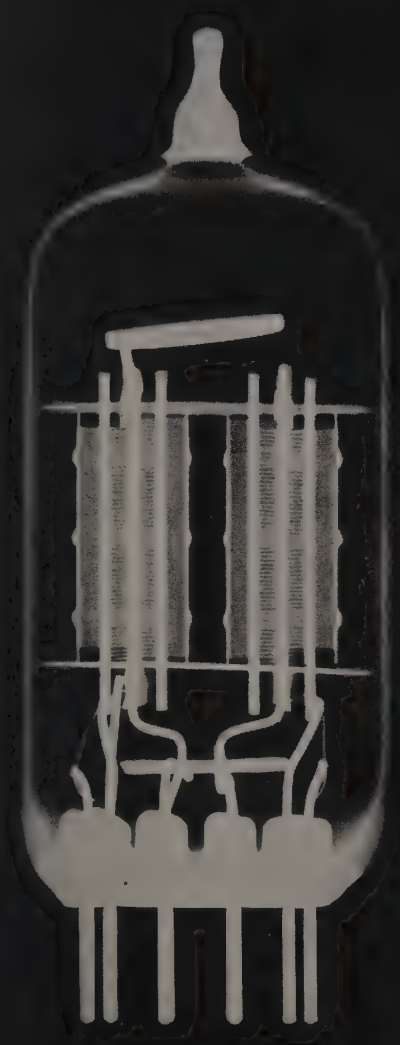
*Continued on page 74*



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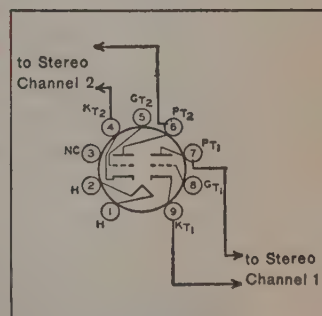
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**SHOSTAKOVICH: *Symphony No. 7***

Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, Karel Ancerl, cond.

● PARLIAMENT PLP 127. Two LP. \$1.98 each.

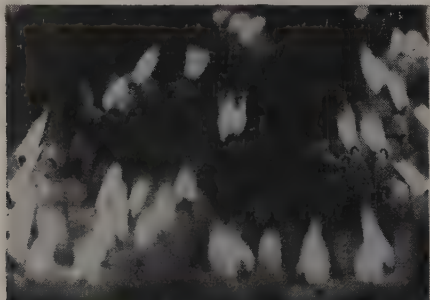
Unlike most topical works inspired by war, the epic, full-program symphony which Shostakovich wrote during the siege of Leningrad refuses to die with its moment. In fact, its stature seems to grow with time, and it may very well come to occupy a leading place in the symphonic literature of this century. It is extremely well played here and very well recorded; in fact, this is the best of the three available versions. How Parliament can sell records of this quality at its low price is a mystery, but one of which it is advisable to take advantage. A.F.

**NEW RELEASES FROM EPIC**

**WEBER AND SCHUBERT OVERTURES.** Weber: *Der Freischütz* Overture; *Oberon* Overture; *Euryanthe* Overture; *Preciosa* Overture. Schubert: Overture in C Major, "In the Italian Style." Antal Dorati conducting the Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam. LC 3684 BC 1078 (Stereorama)



**ALBINONI:** *Concerti*, Op. 9, No. 2 in D Minor for Oboe, Strings and Continuo; No. 4 in A Major for Violin, Strings and Continuo; No. 10 in F Major for Violin, Strings and Continuo. *Sonata* in G Minor for Strings and Continuo, Op. 2, No. 6. Performed by the I MUSICI instrumental ensemble; Evert van Tright, Oboist; Roberto Michelucci, Violinist. LC 3682 BC 1076 (Stereorama)



**BACH:** *Cantata* No. 169, "Gott soll allein mein Herze haben." CHRISTIAN RITTER, *Cantata*, "O amantissime sponse Jesu," Aafje Heynis, Contralto; Albert de Klerk, Organist; Anthon van der Horst conducting the Chorus of the Netherlands Bach Society and the Netherlands Chamber Orchestra (recorded at the Holland Festival).

LC 3683 BC 1077 (Stereorama)



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RECORDS

**STRAUSS, RICHARD: *Don Quixote*, Op. 35**

Antonio Janigro, cello; Milton Preves, viola; Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Fritz Reiner, cond.

● RCA VICTOR LS 2384. LP. \$4.98.

● ● RCA VICTOR LSS 2384. SD. \$5.98.

One can argue convincingly that *Don Quixote* is the finest thing Strauss ever wrote and that this performance is the finest thing Reiner and his men have ever put on discs. There will be persons to dispute both claims, but I am ready to assert that this album is superlative and, particularly in its wonderfully life-sized stereo version, the best *Don Quixote* ever recorded. True, there are the valuable documentations of perform-

ances under the composer himself and under Toscanini, but neither of them conveyed to the listener the slightest illusion of really hearing the work as it is experienced in a concert hall. This recording does. Indeed, although it is of necessity scaled down to living room dimensions, I am astonished, when I contrast this set with the strongest recollections of its original, to realize how close Victor has managed to come to the real thing.

The solo part in the Reiner-Chicago *Don Quixotes* was created by Janos Starker, who unfortunately was unable to play for this recording. His account of the protagonist was somewhat leaner and more intense than Janigro's, the difference between the Picasso and the Goya portraits in the superb book of illustrations and notes that accompanies this disc. I prefer the Starker point of view, but no one should take this to mean that Janigro's performance is anything less than a very fine one.

What registers more forcefully than any single element here is the total effect, a sort of chain reaction that begins with the mind of Strauss, passes through the consciousness of one of his most sympathetic interpreters, and emerges in terms of an orchestra that through more than six decades has been playing this music with authority and affection. The Chicago Symphony gave the American premiere of *Don Quixote* less than a year following the first performance of the work in Europe. But it has never played it better than it does here.

This is one of the dozen or so sets I regard as essential for an appreciation of the potential of stereophonic recording. R.C.M.

**TCHAIKOVSKY: *Capriccio italien*, Op. 45—See Mendelssohn: *Symphony No. 4*, in A, Op. 90 {"Italian"}.**

**TCHAIKOVSKY: *Symphony No. 2*, in C minor, Op. 17 {"Little Russian"}  
†Mussorgsky: *Night on the Bare Mountain***

Philharmonia Orchestra, Carlo Maria Giulini, cond.

● ● ANGEL S 35463. SD. \$5.98.

Giulini is a fascinating conductor, whose work reveals originality and complete authority. Although the cultivated instrumental blend and the clarity of detail remind me of the late Guido Cantelli, as does the breath-taking intensity of his work, Giulini tends to be more subjective in his approach to romantic music.

A stereo version of an LP available for some time, the new edition has more detail, but it also has caught more scraping bow noises and other nonmusical sounds. Since the sound is on a much lower level than the mono, surface hiss also is more pronounced—most noticeably on Side 1, probably because the music there is more subdued.

The *Little Russian* Symphony receives a highly personal reading that is not without some idiosyncrasies. In the first movement, Giulini adopts a slightly slower and more static pace for the second subject than he does for the first. This contrast in mood makes the work sound akin to the composer's later *Pathétique*. And while I generally do not approve of cuts, Giulini's excision in the last movement spares us some banal,



petitious development: An excellent version by Solti is more straightforward, but the Giulini performance has the hallmarks of a more forceful musical personality. The Mussorgsky chiller is played in the Rimsky-Korsakov edition and offers the most rousing performance I have ever heard. H.G.

#### VERDI: Overtures

Symphony Orchestra and Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Tullio Serafin, cond. ANGEL 35676. LP. \$4.98.

Veteran opera conductor that he is, Serafin might be expected to give convincing performances of these Verdi curtain raisers. He does not disappoint. He invests his interpretations with an effective blend of lyricism and dramatic drive, and musical values are never overlooked in a search for an effect of the moment. By the same token, the underlying idea of the opera itself has taken a part in the shaping of Signor Serafin's readings. A fine example is the Act III *Traviata* Prelude. Played by most conductors at about the same tempo as the Prelude to Act I, it usually appears to be little more than a variation on the same theme. In this recording, however, it is taken at a much slower pace, with the result that the music takes on the tragic mien appropriate to the deeply moving scene which is to follow. The execution of the music on this disc by the two British orchestras is nicely polished; the production is clear. P.A.

#### VERDI: *Rigoletto*

Gianna d'Angelo (s), Gilda; Aurora Catterini (ms), Giovanna; Anna di Stasio (ms), the Countess; Carmen Marchi (ms), Aage; Miriam Pirazzini (c), Maddalena; Richard Tucker (t), The Duke; Vittorio Andano (t), Borsa; Eno Mucchiutti (t), Ansher; Renato Capecchi (b), Rigoletto; Roberto Susca (b), Monterone; Giorgio Giordani (b), Marullo; Ivan Sardi (bs), Sparafucile; Guido Pasella (bs), Ceprano. Chorus and Orchestra of Teatro di San Carlo (Naples), Francesco Molinari-Pradelli, cond. COLUMBIA M2L 404. Two LP. \$9.96.  
● COLUMBIA M2S 901. Two SD. \$1.96.

There has been a long time between *Rigolettos* for Columbia; the company's last effort at the opera, many years before World War II, produced the performance by which all others are still judged: Mercedes Capsir, Tino Borgioli, and Riccardo Stracciari, under the direction of Cav. Lorenzo Molajoli—at the time of the listings at present. The new Columbia *Rigoletto*, the first in stereo, hardly approaches the standard of the old, but it does have points of unusual interest. Renato Capecchi is what we might call a "singer's singer." His voice is adequate, no more—medium-sized, a bit dry in quality, somewhat closed off in the upper range. But this critic always brings to his work a mastery of the professional singing-actor's crafts, and in this role he employs nearly every device in the book to color and intensify his portrayal. Thus, Capecchi's characterization is a real study, a demonstration of the means available to the operatic artist; and although he does not command the tonal resources of the late Leonard Warren, or even Taddei

and Merrill (to say nothing of Stracciari), his is in many ways the most complete and rewarding *Rigoletto* in the catalogue. You will see what I mean in short order if you listen to his treatment of the "La ran, la ra's" preceding the *Cortigiani*; or the brilliant delivery of the lines "Signori, in essa e tutta la mia famiglia," etc., when Gilda is returned to him; or any line at all from the last act. Of all the available *Rigolettos*, only Gobbi (Angel) brings a similar perceptiveness to the role, and his portrait has not the variety of Capecchi's.

The rest of the Columbia cast offers no grounds for serious complaint. Tucker is in excellent form, and his Duke will stand comparison with any of the current crop. Gianna d'Angelo reveals a limpid, fresh voice under pinpoint control, as well as con-

siderable musicality; her Gilda could use a trace more of bite to be really satisfying. Pirazzini and Sardi are decent, though unexceptional, in their roles, and the other *comprimario* parts are in good hands.

This brings us to the set's two significant flaws. The first, I fear, is the conducting of Molinari-Pradelli. As with his *Tosca*, things just never seem to pick up. This constant lagging of the pulse is even more disastrous in Verdi than in Puccini, and throws a soggy blanket over the whole business. Part of this may be due to the conductor's consideration for his singers (I suspect this is the case of the Vendetta duet, for example), but I do not think this accounts for the absence of any real drive. The second flaw is in the stereo recording, which is as wretched a job as I've heard. The dance music in the first



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scene is so distant as to be practically out of earshot, leaving the Duke, Borsa, and the rest utterly without any support in the accompaniment for bars at a time. Placing of the singers seems to have been done with dice and a parchesi board. The Vendetta duet again comes in for rough handling; Rigoletto and Gilda are isolated—boxed-in, even—in one channel, downstage, while the orchestra saws away in the other channel, and, miraculously, upstage of the singers! The stereo version is full of such otherworldly moments, and never offers the even curtain of sound and sense of spaciousness one has come to expect. The monophonic set is much the more enjoyable of the two.

The package includes, incidentally, an extremely lavish booklet, several essays, biographies of famous *Rigoletto* performers with pictures, etc. An impressive production job, and quite informative, to boot. C.L.O.

**VIVALDI: Concertos: in G minor, P. 383; in F, P. 301; in E, P. 321; in C, P. 54**

New York Sinfonietta, Max Goberman, cond.

LIBRARY OF RECORDED MASTERPIECES, Vol. 1, No. 2. LP or SD. \$8.50 (on subscription, including scores).

It is a pleasure to repeat that in this, the second volume in a series planned to encompass the complete works of Vivaldi, the high standard set with the first disc has been maintained. The four works are varied in orchestration and all are of excellent quality. P. 301, which seems to be new to micro-groove, has a particularly lovely first movement, with something of the balmy spirit of the beginning of *Spring* in *The Seasons*. The opening Allegro of P. 383 is eventful and rich in texture; its finale is governed by a dramatic ritornel. Its slow movement, like that of P. 54, is for a trio of woodwinds playing alone. Mr. Goberman's idea of having the harpsichord play along here too is a good one, but the harpsichord is too faint, not only here but throughout the disc—the only instance of less than perfect balance in this recording.

Weldon G. and Kathleen Ann Wilber do remarkably well with the fiendishly difficult horn parts of P. 321, and Paul Gershman and Fred Manzella deserve special praise for the precision with which they play the tricky solo violin passages in the finale of P. 54. The sound in general seems rounder than in the previous disc, and the spine of the album is considerably less space-consuming. As before, the Ricordi scores of all four works are included. N.B.

**WAGNER: Tristan und Isolde: Love Duet; Brangäne's Watch; Liebestod**

Astrid Varnay, soprano; Hertha Töpfer, contralto; Wolfgang Windgassen, tenor. Bamberg Symphony, Ferdinand Leitner, cond.

● DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPEM 19193. LP. \$5.98.

● DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPEM 136030. SD. \$6.98.

When Wolfgang Windgassen appeared in the Metropolitan's *Ring* cycle three years ago, New York critics and aficionados kept themselves busy pointing out that the tenor is not a perfect singer. They neglected to note that he is nevertheless the best German

tenor we have had since Svanholm and the aging Melchior held down the *Heldentenor* repertoire over a decade ago. On this record, he sings warmly and evenly, and with unfailing musicality. His voice does not offer the wide range of color or the heroic ring of a great Wagnerian tenor, but it possesses at least some metal and a pleasant quality.

Varnay is all over the place for the first five minutes or so (both voices are placed too close up in the opening pages), but settles down to some rich, dark-textured singing. Her *Liebestod* is intelligently scaled and well knit—in many respects more rewarding than Nilsson's recent effort. Leitner's direction is not inspired, but he keeps the music moving and allows no loose ends. DGG's sound, except for the poor placement noted above, is excellent. C.L.O.

**WEBER: Five Movements for String Orchestra, Op. 5—See Berg: Five Songs, Op. 4.**

**WOLF: Italian Serenade—See Mendelssohn: Symphony No. 4, in A, Op. 90 ("Italian").**

## RECITALS AND MISCELLANY

**JULIUS BAKER and JEAN-PIERRE RAMPAL: Eighteenth-Century Flute Duets**

Schulzke: *Sonata in E minor, No. 1*. Quantz: *Duet in D, Op. 2, No. 5*. Telemann: *Sonata in D, Op. 2, No. 1*. Carl Stamitz: *Duet in A, Op. 27, No. 2*.

Julius Baker, Jean-Pierre Rampal, flutes.

● WASHINGTON WR 419. LP. \$4.98.

One never knows. Even so unpromising a medium as two flutes performing without accompaniment—and playing not languorous impressionistic pieces but mostly forthright baroque counterpoint—can turn out to offer aesthetic delights. The work by Johann Christoph Schulzke, published in 1729 and for a long time attributed to Handel, has a surprising charm, and the Quantz, with its cheerfully loquacious fast movements, is well worth an occasional hearing. The Telemann Sonata has a chipper fugue, which is preceded by a slower movement not devoid of routine sequences; and the Stamitz is a superficial, rococo piece. In short, a .500 batting average, at worst, as far as the music is concerned, but double that for the playing. Baker and Rampal perform here not only with the virtuosity expected of these distinguished artists but with a unanimity that would lead one to believe they had been playing side by side all their lives, instead of being separated most of that time by an ocean. N.B.

**BOLSHOI OPERA: "FAMOUS SOLOISTS"**

Galina Vishnevskaya, Vera Firsova, Lydia Myasninkova, sopranos; Sergei Lemeshev, Ivan Kozlovsky, tenors; Pavel Lisitsian, Ivan Petrov, baritones; Mark Reizen, bass. Chorus, Orchestra of the Bolshoi Theatre and State Radio Orchestra, A. Melik-

Pasheyev, E. Svetlanov, V. Nebolsin, B. Khaikin, and Alexei Kovalov, conds.  
● MONITOR MC 2046. LP. \$4.98.

A number of these singers have been represented on records before, but generally their voices have come through such clouded sound as to be all but unrecognizable. Monitor has done better by them (except for poor Mark Reizen, whose black-voiced, sensitively modulated rendition of Sussanin's aria seems to come from inside a large cistern). The artists are all interesting. The best vocalism comes from Lisitsian, though the excerpt from Rubinstein's *Nero* does not begin to show the range of his virtuosity. Vishnevskaya sounds quite ordinary here, displaying the usual Russian soprano habits of bumping and scooping through the music. She was probably less than inspired by this section of the *Snow Maiden* score, which is dull indeed. The Tsar's Cavatina from the same opera, on the other hand, is a lovely, evocative aria, tenderly sung by the veteran Lemeshev. Petrov, a burly-sounding baritone, does well by the numbers from Shaporin's *The Decembrists*, of which the first is quite haunting, the other two just shots of the Inspiration Formula. Kozlovsky, one of those light Russian tenors who mince their way through scores, sings freely and intelligently, but his is the kind of voice that in a Western house would fill *comprimario* roles. Firsova is clear and cool in the *Francesca da Rimini* selection, which presents a punishing tessitura, and Myasninkova sings Marfa's Prophecy from *Khovanshchina* dramatically. Reizen, as I have mentioned, suffers from poor recording, though the sound elsewhere on the potpourri is clear and reasonably resonant. C.L.O.

**BENIAMINO GIGLI: Recital**

Verdi: *La Forza del destino: Solenne in quest'ora*. Puccini: *La Bohème: O Mimi, tu più*. Bizet: *Les Pêcheurs de perles: Dal tempio al limitar*. Ponchielli: *La Gioconda: Enzo Grimaldo, Principe di Santafior*. Donizetti: *Lucia di Lammermoor: Tu che a Dio*. Meyerbeer: *L'Africana: O Paradiso*. Flotow: *Martha: M'appari*. Toselli: *Serenata*. Drigo: *Noturno d'amore*. Gastaldon: *Musica proibita*. Russo: *Mamma mia che vo' sape'*. De Crescenzo: *Quanno 'a femmena vo'*.

Beniamino Gigli, tenor; Giuseppe de Luca, baritone; Ezio Pinza, bass; orchestra.

● RCA VICTOR LM 2337. LP. \$4.98.

A good view of the great tenor's recorded art, taken from the years (1925–30) when his liquid, ringing voice was in its fullest glory. The personal mannerisms which later reached objectionable proportions are here under wraps, though the *Lucia* scene is infuriatingly sloppy from a musical standpoint. The songs are inimitably done, and De Luca is every inch the tenor's equal in the four magnificent duets. The transfers are good, and those selections previously issued on LP sound somewhat better on this record than in earlier incarnations. C.L.O.

**CHRISTA LUDWIG: Song Recital**

Schubert: *Die Allmacht; Fischerweise*. Brahms: *Liebestreu; Sappische Ode; Die Mainmacht; Der Schmied*. Wolf: *Gesang Weylas; Auf einer Wanderung*. Richard Strauss: *Die Nacht, Allerseelen*. Mahler: *Ich*



*bin der Welt; Des Antonius von Padua Fischpredigt; Rheinlegendchen.*

Christa Ludwig, mezzo; Gerald Moore, piano.

• ANGEL 35592. LP. \$4.98.

This young mezzo is apparently not one to shrink from a challenge, for several of these songs are in every respect—vocally, musically, interpretatively—among the most difficult ever written. She meets the musical requirements with precision, aided, of course, by the almost infallible Moore. There is no cause for serious complaint about her voice, either: it is fairly flexible, of basically appealing quality and impressive volume. There is a hint of dryness in the lower part and some harshness in the upper. Consequently, she cannot quite project the important declamatory low As and B flats of *Die Allmacht* (neither can most singers), and the high G natural of "*blickst du flehend empor*" in the same song

has a rather sharp bite; nonetheless, the voice sounds fine most of the time.

Her interpretations do not yet possess the intensity that would place them at the highest level, but she has the right idea for nearly all of this material. Her most successful renditions are of the Brahms songs: *Die Mainacht* has not quite all its wonted passionate despair, but the *Liebestreu* dialogue is well defined; *Sapphische Ode* is richly intoned; and *Der Schmied* (also a *tour de force* for Moore) is thundered out excitingly. On the second side, I like Miss Ludwig best in the *Gesang Weylas* and *Allerseelen*. She also comes very close to Mahler's profound *Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen*, despite a few uncomfortable high pianissimos. The other two Mahler songs are from *Das knaben Wunderhorn*. I am not on a wave length with this particular type of Lied, but others may delight in them.

Moore's accompaniments are exemplary throughout—he remains in a class of his

own—and the Angel sound is clear and full, though the singer's breath intake sounds all too close. Complete texts, with translations and notes, are provided. C.L.O.

#### SVIATOSLAV RICHTER: *Recital*

Bach: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1, in D minor, S. 1052*. Mozart: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 20, in D minor, K. 466*. Schumann: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, in A minor, Op. 54* (with other works). Rachmaninoff: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 2, in D minor, Op. 18* (with other works). Prokofiev: *Concertos for Piano and Orchestra: No. 1, in D flat, Op. 10; No. 5, in G, Op. 55*.

Sviatoslav Richter, piano; various orchestras and conductors.

For a feature review of four discs presenting Richter as soloist, see p. 56.



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## MARCELLA SEMBRICH: *Recital*

Rossini: *Barbiere di Siviglia*: *Una voce poco fa*. *Semiramide*: *Bel raggio*. Bellini: *I Puritani*: *Qui la voce*. Verdi: *Ernani*: *Ernani involami*. *La Traviata*: *Ah! For' e lui*; *Sempre libera*. *Rigoletto*: *Caro nome*. Gounod: *Faust*: *Air des bijoux*. Hahn: *Si mes vers avaient des ailes*. Schubert: *Wohin?* Schumann: *Der Nussbaum*. Donizetti: *Linda di Chamounix*: *O luce di quest' anima*. Moniuszko: *Halka*: *Gdyby rannem*. Chopin: *Zyczenie*. Lehár: *Merry Widow*: *Dolce amor*. O. Straus: *Waltz Dream*: *Non sai mia bella*.

Marcella Sembrich, soprano; piano; orchestra.

● Rococo R 23. LP. \$5.95.

Of all the golden voices of the Golden Age, that of Marcella Sembrich (1858–1935) was among the most renowned. Sembrich began her musical studies at the age of four and at ten was giving public recitals on both the violin and piano. It was at the urging of Liszt that, in 1874, she began her training as a singer. Years in various European opera houses followed, with an American debut at the Metropolitan in the fall of 1883. In 1898 she became a regular member of the Met's company and remained until her farewell appearance in opera on February 6, 1909.

Sembrich's voice was one which, I suspect, recorded rather badly. Many tones in the upper register which probably sounded full and round in the opera house come through as merely hooty on records. It is clear enough, however, that her voice possessed remarkable body for a high soprano; that her low register was extraordinarily rich; and

that her faculty for sailing through intricate passage work at full voice was quite as well developed as Tetrassini's. Sembrich originals are difficult to come by nowadays, and this release, dubbed with Rococo's usual care, is welcome. Of special interest: the unpublished Hahn and Schubert recordings, the latter done with the fermatas which were in accepted use in those days; the *Faust* aria with piano accompaniment; and the more familiar renditions of "Bel raggio," "Una voce poco fa," and "Qui la voce." The *Traviata* and *Ernani* selections are heard in their 1906 versions, not 1908. C.L.O.

## THE UNKNOWN CENTURY OF AMERICAN CLASSICAL MUSIC (1760–1860), VOL. I: *Arias, Anthems, and Chorales of the American Moravians*

Ilona Kombrink, soprano; Amelio Estanislao, baritone; Moravian Festival Chorus and Orchestra, Thor Johnson, cond.

● COLUMBIA ML 5427. LP. \$4.98.

● ● COLUMBIA MS 6102. SD. \$5.98.

For a feature review of this recording, see p. 57.

## LEONARD WARREN: *Recital*

Leoncavallo: *Pagliacci*: *Prologo*. Verdi: *Rigoletto*: *Cortigiani, vil razza dannata*. *La Traviata*: *Di Provenza*. *Il Trovatore*: *Il balen*. *Macbeth*: *Pieta, Rispetto*. *Simon Boccanegra*: *Figlia a tal nome palpito*. *La Forza del destino*: *Urna fatale*. Giordano: *Andrea Chénier*: *Nemico della patria*. Ponchielli: *La Gioconda*: *O monumento*.

Leonard Warren, baritone; Astrid Varnay,

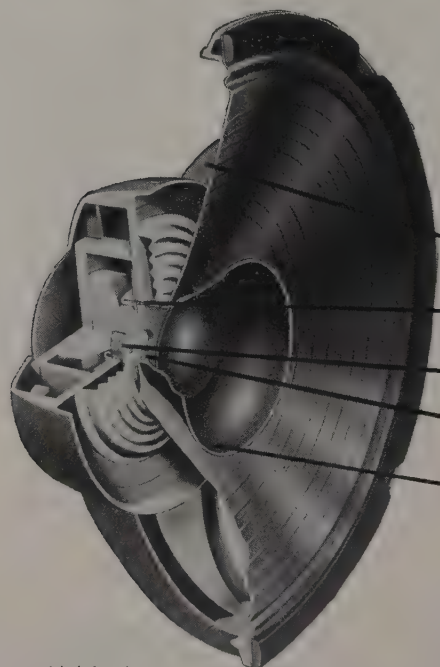
soprano (in the *Boccanegra* duet); various orchestras and conductors.

● RCA Victor LM 2453. LP. \$4.98.

Leonard Warren's standing as the Met's *primo baritone* was such that though barely six weeks of the home season remained at the time of his death, the company was obliged to import no fewer than three Italian baritones, as well as to reassign several performances to other resident singers, in order to patch together the casts of several Verdi operas for which he had been scheduled. During the last fifteen years, there has simply been no competition for him in many of the big Italian roles, and when long-phrased, high-lying cantilena was called for he was on a par with the best this century has offered.

The singing on this record is uninter- ruptedly beautiful; yet Victor could have done better in the way of a retrospective view of the Warren career. There is not a single selection from the recordings he made during the Forties, when his voice was steadier and more brilliant—though his interpretations less idiomatic—than at any time during the next decade. The earliest recording on this disc is the *Boccanegra* duet, done in January 1950, and as sheer singing, it is the best selection of them all, although even the very last ("Il balen"—July 1959) is considerably better than I have heard from any other current baritone. Least satisfying is the "Nemico della patria"—well sung, of course, but dispassionate and almost casual. Varnay is a fine partner in the extended *Boccanegra* scene, and the sound is at least adequate in all cases. C.L.O.

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# Operetta Windfall—Four Lighthearted Discs

THIS QUARTET of brand-new operetta recordings from Angel, all sung in English, is a delightful and unexpected windfall for all lovers of light theatre music. *Lilac Time* and *White Horse Inn* have not been presented in the recorded operetta repertoire, and are thus most particularly welcome; Noel Coward's *Bitter Sweet* is given its first extended performance on discs; and although two recordings of Lehár's *Merry Widow*, sung in English, are still available in the domestic catalogue, they are both now silently displaced by the new version.

The *Merry Widow*, Lehár's most popular work, is presented here by members of the best of the recent Sadler's Wells Theatre production in an animated, but unforced, performance of considerable vocal excellence. The charming portrayal of June Bronhill as Anna takes highest honors, the delightfully sly portrait of Valenciennne etched by Marion Lowe is certainly not far behind. Thomas Round may not be the most dashing Danilo, but his light tenor voice is attractive and skillfully handled. William McElpine's strong baritone is shown off to good effect in the two duets with Valenciennne, and Howell Glynne makes the most of the few opportunities that come his way, in the role of Baron Zeta. The lovely Lehár tunes have been fitted to some new lyrics by Christopher Hassall, and these, a vast improvement on the rapid rhymes of earlier versions, give the work an added freshness.

*Lilac Time*, an English musical of 1922, is a free adaptation of the Viennese operetta *Das Dreimäderlhaus*. The score, a collection of miscellaneous Schubert music arranged by Heinrich Berte, is a continuous delight. An oddity of the score, incidentally, is the absence of a single solo number for the heroine, only two for the hero, and the fact that the most famous song, the *Serenade*, is assigned to a secondary character.) The operetta, with its unflattering portrait of Schubert, is weak, and the English lyrics by

Adrian Ross, a Cambridge don who dabbled in the theatre, almost sophomoric. But as the lovely trios, quartets, and sextets follow one another, one forgets these defects, beguiled by the music itself. This is a very good all-round performance, notably strong in the excellence of the ensemble numbers and the vocal work of John Cameron. What little here comes June Bronhill's way is very beautifully sung, and her partner in the duets, Thomas Round, seems happier as Schubert than he did as Lehár's Danilo.

*Bitter Sweet* is one of Noel Coward's loveliest scores, and why we have had to wait so long for a recording of something other than excerpts is one of those inexplicable mysteries of the record industry. Fortunately, it now arrives virtually complete and in a recording that does full justice to Coward's music. In the role of Sari, Vanessa Lee gives a most elegant and distinguished performance. Some may find her singing too mannered, but to me it seems particularly well suited to the role. Roberto Cardinali, as her ill-starred lover Carl, is equally attractive vocally, and John Hauxvell, his rival for Sari's hand, is splendid in Coward's rousing song *Tokay*. But the real surprise here is the excellent performance of Julie Dawn, in the role of Manon, the fading cabaret star. In both of her songs, the lovely *If Love Were All* and *Kiss Me*, Miss Dawn is wonderfully affecting, and her little vignette of a *passé soubrette* is a small personal triumph. My only regret is for the omission of the *Green Carnation* number, particularly since *The Ladies of the Town* sounds a little demure for my taste.

*White Horse Inn*, the last of this quartet, dates from 1930, although it did not reach New York until 1936. Immensely successful in London (it was even revived during the War), this big lavish spectacle failed to appeal to American audiences, despite what then seemed the excellent score by Ralph Benatzky and Robert Stolz. Thirty years

after its composition this music sounds extremely dated, and the recorded performance emphasizes the fact. The waltzes seem far too schmaltzy, and the jollity quite forced. Unfortunately, too, the entire performance is vocally much below the level attained by the other three recordings in this series. Andy Cole makes heavy work of the songs given him, and Rita Williams turns in a very listless performance. Perhaps this all sounds better in German than the English in which it is given here, but I doubt it.

The Angel recorded sound is excellent on all four monophonic versions, but the stereo sound is so constricted and pressed in that I often found it difficult to listen to.

## LEHAR: *The Merry Widow* (highlights)

June Bronhill, Marion Lowe, Thomas Round, Howell Glynne; Sadler's Wells Opera Company and Orchestra, William Reid, cond.

- ANGEL 35816. LP. \$4.98.
- ● ANGEL S 35816. LP. \$5.98.

## SCHUBERT: *Lilac Time* (arr. Berte)

June Bronhill, Thomas Round, John Cameron; Rita Williams Singers; Michael Collins and His Orchestra.

- ANGEL 35817. LP. \$4.98.
- ● ANGEL S 35817. SD. \$5.98.

## COWARD: *Bitter Sweet*

Vanessa Lee, Julie Dawn, Roberto Cardinali, John Hauxvell; Rita Williams Singers; Tony Osborne and His Orchestra.

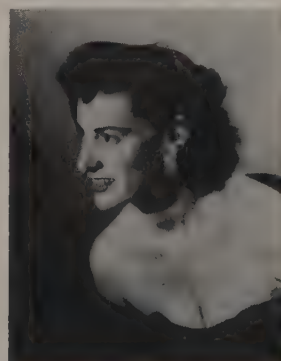
- ANGEL 35814. LP. \$4.98.
- ● ANGEL S 35814. SD. \$5.98.

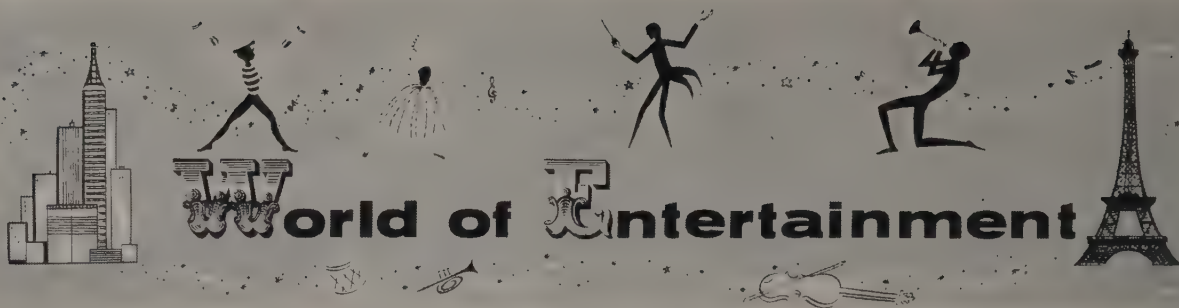
## BENATZKY and STOLZ: *White Horse Inn*

Mary Thomas, Rita Williams, Andy Cole, Charles Young; Rita Williams Singers; Tony Osborne and His Orchestra.

- ANGEL 35815. LP. \$4.98.
- ● ANGEL S 35815. SD. \$5.98.

Thomas Round sings the dashing Danilo in Lehár's *Merry Widow*, and June Bronhill charmingly portrays the lady herself. At the far right is Julie Dawn, whose performance lends added enchantment to *Bitter Sweet*.





## Here at Home

**"Gypsy Passion."** Andre Kostelanetz and His Orchestra. Columbia CS 8228, \$4.98 (SD).

Nobody with a partiality for gypsy music can afford to pass up this sonically impressive concert of Romany favorites. Kostelanetz, an admitted wizard at this sort of thing, has outdone himself here. These fiery works are played with such burning intensity that one wonders why the vinyl record has not been consumed by the heat of the performances. The slick and precision-timed expositions are a far cry from any likely to be heard on the plains of Hungary or in the Rumanian hinterlands, but this in no sense lessens their impact. The conductor has wisely included items from the operettas of Lehár, Kalman, and Herbert as a contrast to the genuine gypsy music of the balance of the program. Some of the remaining items have been newly titled, which may set one to trying to trace their origins. (In only one case was I successful, discovering that *Gypsy Fiddler* was actually a blood relative to the Rumanian folk dance *Ciocarla*.) Sharing the honors with Kostelanetz are the engineers, who have achieved a real triumph in sound in their ensnarement of orchestral voices, from the muted strings of a solo violin and the warm twang of the cymbalom to the full-throated throb of the entire string section.

**"Moonstruck."** John Cacavas and His Orchestra. Dot DLP 25269, \$4.98 (SD).

Whatever effect the moon may have on ordinary mortals, it is as nothing compared to the hypnotic spell it seems to cast on song writers. Were their hymns to the lunar satellite removed from the pop song catalogue, it would be depleted by fifty per cent. From the legion of moon songs extant, John Cacavas has settled for eight, completing his program with two addressed to the stars, plus two that salute the night. The nocturnal firmament is pretty well covered. Superbly arranged for violins and voices (the latter a female choir which lends a sort of ethereal quality), this is a very excellent program of listenable music. Dot's stereo sound is splendidly rich and spacious.

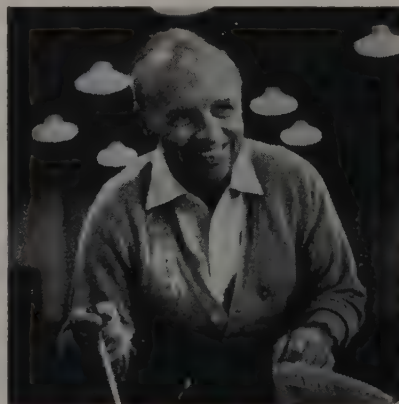
**"Love, Honor and All That Jazz."** Martha Wright; Orchestra, Joe Harnell, cond. RCA Victor LPM 2096, \$3.98 (LP).

Don't be put off by the title of this record, or you'll be missing one of the most delight-

ful discs to appear this year. Martha Wright, who took over the lead in *South Pacific* from Mary Martin, makes all too few recordings. Her Jubilee record of a few years ago—titled *Censored*, though the contents would hardly have raised a hair at a Sunday school meeting—was a great one; this is even better.

Apart from a couple of standard ballads, which do not seem to be the singer's forte, the material is clever and unhackneyed. Among the special joys are Miss Wright's versions of Cole Porter's *No Lover* and the ironical *Guess Who I Saw Today* from *New Faces of 1952*, both very artfully handled. And one or two special items that might be termed suburban housewife soliloquies will surely amuse every suburban homemaker. Particularly effective are *What Have You Done All Day* (husbands may cringe a little at this one—even after a tough day at the office) and the brightly paced *Golf Widow*, all about the disrupting effect of golf on romance. Also uncommonly sure and affecting is Elisse Boyd's *The Other Woman*, a plaintive little number with a De Maupassant twist. In addition to the splendid work of the singer, the recording benefits greatly from Joe Harnell's expert orchestral arrangements.

**"On the Beach."** Frank Chacksfield and His Orchestra. London LL 3158, \$3.98 (LP). Whatever memories one may have of the film *On the Beach*, it is a pretty safe bet that the title song is not among them. As a matter of fact, I suspect that most people assumed, as I did, that *Waltzing Matilda* was the main theme. Evidently I was in error, for here is Chacksfield with a recording of something that purports to be the title song though I do not remember even having heard it. Actually it is easily the least impressive entrant



Kostelanetz: "Gypsy Passion" really burns.

in a concert of film songs that includes *Laurel and Hardy*, *Limelight*, *Friendly Persuasion*, *April Love*, and several others which achieved passing popularity. The entire presentation is of excellent taste, and happily free from the musical excesses favored by some of Chacksfield's English compatriots. London's sound is exemplary, and the record is particularly recommended to those interested in a remembrance of things past.

**"Join with Bing and Sing Along."** Bing Crosby; Chorus and Orchestra, Jack Hylton, cond. Warner Bros. WS 1366, \$4.98 (SD).

Apart from the fact that the Old Groove has been coaxed into serving as *compère* for this sing-along session, there is little to distinguish it from innumerable other recordings along the same line. Practically all the songs selected are basic for such occasions, and the arrangements, although good enough, are not outstandingly different from those on similar discs. But if you want to sing, here's a chance to do it in the very best of company. Crosby's relaxed approach and genial way of handling the numbers might easily induce the most reluctant vocalist to raise his voice in song. Warner Brothers' developing stereo sound is hard to resist, and in the end this could be the deciding factor in your choice of a sing-along recording.

**"Music of Today the Glenn Miller Way."** Ray Eberle and His Orchestra. Design DCF 1004, \$2.98 (LP and SD).

Presumably this is the same recording of the Ray Eberle band as the tape issue (Teleflex TT 401) reviewed by R. D. Darrell in the May issue of this magazine. I am in agreement with Mr. Darrell's evaluation of the performances, and notice the disc version here mainly because it is the first "compatible" record from Design (see "Toward Stereo Compatibility," p. 45) to reach my hands. Thanks to Design's "Uni-Groove Stereo System," the disc may be played safely on either monophonic or stereo equipment. I played Side 1 with a mono pickup through a single speaker, and found the recorded sound of excellent quality except for a very slight tendency to fuzziness. I was unable to detect any breakup or deterioration of sound even at the innermost groove. Side 2, played with a stereo pickup through two speakers, showed a clearing up of the fuzziness. The sound became crystal clear with considerably more depth than when played monophonically, and marked stereo separation. After five mono playings I found no damage of the groove structure.



**"Rodgers and Hammerstein Songbook."** Richard Kiley; George Siravo and His Orchestra. RCA Camden CBL 102, \$3.98 (Two LP); RCA Camden CBS 102, \$5.98 (Two SD).

Richard Kiley's excellent program of twenty-four songs from the Rodgers and Hammerstein repertoire is a courageous, and very successful, attempt to present a reasonably complete picture of the famous collaborators' work. Although the majority of the songs are from their more successful Broadway shows, Kiley has delved into such comparative Rodgers and Hammerstein failures as *Allegro*, *Me and Juliet*, and *Pipe Dream* to rescue from oblivion numbers like *A Fellow Needs a Girl*, *So Far*, and *No Other Love*. Nor has he forgotten that a television production of *Cinderella* contained one charming Rodgers song, *Do I Love You Because You're Beautiful*, or that the team's sole foray into filmdom, *State Fair*, produced two fine numbers in *It Might As Well Be Spring* and *It's a Grand Night for Singing*. It is perhaps a little odd to find Kiley selecting no less than six numbers that were originally written for female voice, but Kiley is an accomplished vocalist and he does handsomely by nearly all these numbers.

The singer is occasionally supported by a chorus, whose work is neither intrusive nor unpleasant. The orchestral support provided by the Siravo orchestra is decidedly discreet; it could, I think, have had a greater body of sound to it, and also have dispensed with the use of a Hammond organ in some of the arrangements. The album itself is a very handsome presentation, with particularly acid liner notes by Stanley Green, and at Camden's low asking price the set is a decided bargain.

**"The Sound of Music."** Members of the Trapp Family Singers and Chorus, Franz Wanner, cond. Warner Bros. WS 1377, \$4.98 (SD).

Since reviewing the original cast recording of *The Sound of Music*, on which I reported quite unfavorably, I have had the opportunity to listen to a number of other recordings of the score. Only two have given me sufficient reason to temper my previous strictures. One was the excellent Percy Faith orchestral presentation of the music, the other this new recording of the complete score by the Trapp Family Singers. Hammerstein's lyrics, which I had found so saccharine in content, seem much less syrupy when handled with the taste and sensitivity that this fine group displays, and Rodgers' music gains immeasurably from the excellent arrangements and skillful direction of Franz Wanner. The almost folklike simplicity of the presentation here brings out details that the more commercial approach of the original cast recording completely obscured. In addition to this Warner Brothers' excellently wide-spread stereo sound and one has the cleanest and most artistic presentation of the score now to be found on records.

**"Can-Can."** Recording from the sound track of the film. Orchestra, Nelson Riddle, cond. Capitol W 1301, \$4.98 (LP). In an effort to inject a little more fizz into the not so bubbling score Cole Porter wrote for the Broadway musical *Can-Can*, the makers of the film version have interpolated three songs from earlier Porter musicals, but some-

how these old favorites seem to me to have wound up in the wrong hands. *You Do Something to Me* from *Fifty Million Frenchmen* (1929), which would have been a great number for Sinatra, is handed to Louis Jourdan, who sings it with almost studied indifference. Chevalier gets *Just One of Those Things*, originally heard in *Jubilee* (1935), and his tired and flat version is exactly what the title says. Quite recently Chevalier made a devilishly sly version of *Let's Do It* (which Porter wrote for the Irene Bordoni 1928 musical play *Paris*), but unfortunately the song is here presented as a duet by Shirley MacLaine and Frank Sinatra, who quite fail to project the implications of Porter's lyrics. Incidentally, if the additional lyrics used are the work of Porter, there appears to be a strong decline in that gentleman's usual good taste.

The film version retains the three strongest numbers from the original score, *It's All Right with Me*, *I Love Paris*, and *C'est Magnifique*, all bright examples of Porter's style, though not perhaps out of his top drawer. The entire score has been sparkingly arranged by Nelson Riddle, who also leads an orchestral performance of considerable bustle.

**"Dietrich in Rio."** Marlene Dietrich. Columbia WL 164, \$4.98 (LP); Columbia WS 316, \$5.98 (SD).

Marlene Dietrich, resolutely refusing to stick to her knitting as most grandmothers are expected to, continues to reduce night club audiences all over the world to a state bordering on frenzy. Recently she stormed Rio de Janeiro, one of the few remaining bastions not previously exposed to her charms, with results that were as predictable as they were enthusiastic. After a resumé of the songs which brought her to Hollywood, she offers, once more, the inevitable *Boys in the Back Room*. Miss Dietrich is now milking this one for all it's worth, and it begins to sound like a burlesque of her original version. After a couple of European favorites, she does an unexpectedly good version of the old Peggy Lee number *Well All Right*. Changing into a man's white evening-dress suit, the artist strolls through some numbers which do not seem particularly well suited to her, although there's nothing wrong with her tearful rendition of *One for My Baby*. Miss Dietrich is a knowing performer, but that whiskeyish soprano is no substitute for her glamorous personality. For an "on the spot" recording, the mono version is acceptable, even though it seldom gets beyond middle-fi. The stereo is scarcely any improvement.

**"Mood in Mink."** Teal Joy; Orchestra, Jack Quigley, cond. Seeco CELP 457, \$3.98 (LP).

Teal Joy is given top billing on this record, which Seeco lists in its Jazz Celebrity Series. Most of the jazz feeling, however, results from the uncommonly fine work of a small group of supporting musicians. I'd say that Miss Joy is a good pop singer who does moody songs fairly well; but she is not really a jazz singer, in spite of some borrowings from Sarah Vaughan—and I doubt that she is a celebrity . . . yet. The Seeco sound is radiantly clear and well distributed, a considerable improvement on previous Seeco discs that have come my way.

JOHN F. INDCOX

## Foreign Flavor

**"A History of Cante Flamenco."** Manolo Caracol, cantaor. Top Rank RDM 1, \$7.96 (Two LP).

This two-record set is *not* designed for casual listening. *Aficionados* of flamenco, however, will find it a *sine qua non*. Twenty-six bands offer vocal illustrations of every significant category of flamenco song. Manolo Caracol's voice—mature, virile, harsh-timbred—coupled with his gypsy purity of expression makes each example a memorable vignette. His emotional spectrum is awesome: from the bitter unaccompanied loneliness of *Martinetes* through the wrenching guitar-haunted laments of *Siguiriyas* to the soaring trumpet and drum-bracketed exaltation of a *Saeta*. Six solid pages of annotation by the Spanish scholar, Professor Manuel Garcia Matos, trace the history of *cante flamenco*, brilliantly define all of its forms, and give a translation of each selection in the set. The engineering is without flaw; the format of the album is handsome. Herewith, an unreserved *¡Ole!* for a stunning achievement.

**"Folk Songs of Russia."** Netania Davrath; Orchestra, Robert DeCormier, cond. Vanguard VRS 9065, \$4.98 (LP); VSD 2056, \$5.98 (SD).

Miss Davrath is a limpid Israeli soprano of arresting range and security. She sings these Russian traditional ballads as a musically sophisticated artist rather than as a folk singer, but the sheer beauty of her voice imparts a new dimension of emotion. *O Thou Silent Night*, for example, is all languid, lonely loveliness. A thoroughly satisfying release on all counts, with little to choose between the one- and two-channel versions.

**"The Grail Singers."** Folkways FW 8775, \$5.95 (LP).

The Grail Movement is an international organization of Roman Catholic young women engaged in social, educational, and cultural works. Working and living together in teams, Grail girls of thirty-seven nationalities have exchanged their traditional songs. This Folkways recording of a Grail songfest in their American headquarters at Loveland, Ohio, has an appeal far transcending the bounds of folklore. With its world-wide composition, the Grail provides a unique blend of authenticity and universality for the ballads of the twelve countries represented on the recording. The chorus is gifted, the soloists are superb, the arrangements sparkle. Particularly moving are the Chinese *Caravan Song*, *La Calandria* from New Mexico, and Ireland's *Soontree Lullaby*. Good sound throughout.

**"Soviet Army Chorus and Band."** Parliament PLP 128, \$1.98 (LP).

Another well-recorded, bargain-priced entry by Parliament out of the Czech Supraphon catalogue. The Soviet Army Chorus, of course, richly merits its international laurels; listen only to its massive yet lyrical interpretations of *Volga Boatmen*, *Not a Sound Is Heard*, and *Look to the Sky* for proof. These are clearly definitive performances. The price, too, would seem to brook no competition.

**"Lament on the Death of a Bullfighter and Other Poems and Songs of Federico García Lorca."** Germaine Montero; Orchestra, Salvador Becarisse, cond. Vanguard VRS 9055, \$4.98 (LP).

García Lorca ranks as one of our century's great poets. His dazzling command of language shaped a brooding, sex-ridden verse sinuous with imagery. The roots of his art are the gnarled Moorish roots of Spain. The darkling tragedy he portrays is always intensely personalized, yet it limns the greater collective doom of his nation and—ultimately—of mankind. Germaine Montero declares a selection of Lorca's finest poems in a clear, husky voice subtly varied with emotional color. Although I personally prefer the deeper timbre of a masculine voice in the stately title poem, Señorita Montero's read-

ing soars with bitter power. The disc's greatest impact, however, lies in her singing of several Lorca songs. Of these, the aching loveliness of *Las Morillas de Jaén* re-creates a medieval sorrow that can still wrench a twentieth-century heart.

On technical grounds, the record excels save for a slight echo. Vanguard has thoughtfully provided full texts and translations. A knowledgeable proofreading would have improved both, but the complete package remains a near-model of its kind.

**"Marais and Miranda Go Native: More Songs of the South African Veld."** Kapp KL 1180, \$3.98 (LP); KS 3180, \$4.98 (SD).

With their customary easy charm, Marais and Miranda explore the songs of South Africa's

restive nonwhite population. Although ethnic devotees may complain that English versions with orchestral accompaniment vitiate any sense of authenticity, the singers strive only for an intelligible approximation rather than a re-creation of the originals and in this they succeed admirably. In fact, it is clear that a good deal of thought underlies their transcriptions. As between the two editions, I preferred the intimacy of the monophonic version to the here superfluous sweep of stereo.

**"Songs of Greece."** Theodore Alevizos guitar accompaniment. Tradition TLI 1037, \$4.98 (LP).

Greek traditional music has not fared very well at the hands of record impresarios, but Tradition does much to balance accounts with Theodore Alevizos' recital of fifteen solidly melodic ballads. Mr. Alevizos' clear tenor wobbles occasionally, but his command of this unique idiom and the obvious affection he bears the songs far outweigh any minor shortcomings. This record possesses an instant appeal that grows with rehearing. Admirable engineering.

**"Vienna Remembered."** Symphony of the Air, Mischel Piastro, cond. Decca DL 8956, \$3.98 (LP).

The glut of releases memorializing this city's *Ring* a well-trampled musical rut. Mischel Piastro cannily strikes a fresh (well, relatively fresh) note, however, by combining an excellent orchestra and eight excellent Viennese waltzes. The Symphony of the Air supple and full-throated, responds to every nuance of Piastro's crowd-pleasing baton. Splendid engineering further enhances this example of an overplayed genre that still miraculously, remains appealing.

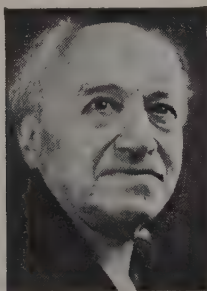
**"¡Viva Mexico! Rancheros de Mexico, Vol. Two."** Mariachi Miguel Dias. Audion Fidelity AFSD 5898, \$6.95 (SD).

The Miguel Dias Mariachi displays all the varied sonorities of a typical Mexican group but relies less heavily upon brass than most. This is not wholly unfortunate: forty recorded minutes of trumpet-laced mariachi music can shred even the toughest eardrums. In any case, the Dias group is both capable and authentic. As evidenced by their playing of *La Raspa* and *Jesúsito en Chihuahua*, they can also be vastly entertaining. Their vocal forays, however, are less happy. Superlative stereo sound neatly separates the individual components of the mariachi without ever inhibiting the over-all unity.

**"European Hits in America."** Richard Wolfe and His Orchestra. Kapp KL 1183, \$3.98 (LP); KS 3183, \$4.98 (SD).

Big, noisy arrangements of European hits that have made their mark in the U.S. Maestro Wolfe maintains a driving beat that pays off handsomely when a song—such as *Guaglione*—and the Wolfe style meet halfway; but other entries, notably the German *Morgen*, escape the mold completely. Another price paid for the unvarying emphasis upon beat is that at some point all the songs begin to sound disconcertingly alike. Fine full sound in both editions, but stereo shows Wolfe's full-blown approach to fullest advantage.

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**"A Program of Russian Song."** Jaroff Women's Chorus, Serge Jaroff, cond. Decca DL 710019, \$5.98 (SD).

...a departure from his bluffly male Don Cossack cohorts, Serge Jaroff offers a talented female chorus in a program of softly charming Russian songs. Both the singers and their selections are outstanding, but Jaroff's direction suffers from the same unvarying monotony of approach that characterizes his Don Cossack essays. Happily, however, the songs managed to hold their own as entities. Nicely balanced stereo, somewhat deficient in depth. Mine was an unduly scratchy pressing.

**Mazowsze Song and Dance Ensemble of Poland.** Mira Ziminska-Sygietynska, dir. Bruno BR 50071, \$3.98 (LP).

...frequent sorties from beyond the Curzon line have established a commendable Western reputation for the Mazowsze Ensemble. Here is a typical program aswarm with catchy tunes and vivid arrangements. But while the dull recorded sound cannot disable the effervescent Poles, lack of adequate notes certainly disables the interested listener. The purchaser of a record in a foreign language deserves something more than a mere list of titles.

**Valentino Tangos.** The Castilians, Jack Pleis, cond. Decca DL 8952, \$3.98 (LP); DL 78952, \$4.98 (SD).

...trippy arrangements of tangos associated—more or less loosely, and mostly more—with the late Rudolph Valentino. The Jack Pleis treatment smooths everything into a danceable mold, but in the process purges all excitement. Never has *El Relicario* seemed more adequate, *La Cumparsita* less whorish. Aging hidden ladies may heave a nostalgic sigh, but even Valentino would be hard put to flare a nostril over this recital. Intermittent surface noise marred the mono review copy; the stereo edition was cleaner and brighter.

**"Behind the Great Wall."** Sounds and Music of China. Monitor MP 525, \$4.98 (LP).

These are excerpts from a motion picture filmed in China by Frenchman Robert Menegoz. The Chinese sounds of railroad, trolley, and street are authentic enough but uprooted from the visual component of the film—they fail either to interest or to move. At the same time, traditional orchestrations of *The Little Mill* and *The Seasons* will mist the eyes of any Old China Hand. Such happy interludes, however, cannot redeem a singularly ineffective release.

**Souvenirs of Spain.** Niño de Murcia and His Spanish Ensemble. Everest LPBR 5068, \$3.98 (LP).

Niño de Murcia is a kind of vocal hybrid being a tightrope between authentic flamenco—in which he is formidable—and lighter Spanish "pops." Perhaps as a result of this duality, his performances are not too sharply limned and his foot slips one way or the other from time to time. Additionally, the Child of Murcia's approach to Spanish music is colored by an odd New World tint: one suspects that he has listened to, and mimicked, far too many Mexican troubadours. In the end, El Niño's appeal becomes a matter of individual taste; the potential buyer would do well to listen first. Excellent sound.

O. B. BRUMMELL

## hi-fi music

**"The Big Symphonic Band Sound."** Ithaca College of Music Concert Band, Walter Beeler, cond. Golden Crest CR 4022 (LP), SCR 4022 (SD), \$4.98 each.

Augmented by faculty members, notably the cornet soloist James Burke, the collegians sound much more professional here than in their earlier "Ithaca Symphonic Winds" release. The disc's prime interest, however, lies in the fact that it is one of the few American recordings so far which specifically acknowledges the use of the "M/S" system of

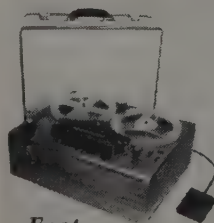
coaxially mounted microphones. This is scarcely apparent, of course, in the monophonic edition, but the stereo version has all the clean brilliance of the former plus an unusually full-bodied depth—achieved without the more marked channel separation characteristic of most domestic recordings utilizing two quite widely spaced mikes.

**"Accordion Polka."** Joe Basile and His Orchestra. Audio Fidelity AFSD 5914, \$6.95 (SD).

This ninth release in Basile's popular series is one of, if not *the*, best: musically for its dozen lusty polkas (including two of the leader's originals) and the gusto of its performances, in which Basile's own crisp accordion playing shares honors with that of



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an elastically bouncing xylophonist; technically for its strongly stereoistic and ultra-brilliant, if somewhat hard-toned, recording.

**"Diverse Winds."** Eastman Wind Ensemble, Frederick Fennell, cond. Mercury MG 50221, \$4.98 (LP).

A worthy sequel to Fennell's widely admired "Winds in Hi-Fi" program of just over a year ago. The present repertoire is even more adventuresome, for all four works seem to be first recordings. If Khachaturian's *Armenian Dances* are overreminiscent of his more familiar and effective orchestral suites, both Vincent Persichetti's dramatically expressive Symphony No. 6 and Walter Hartley's darkly colored, highly incisive Concerto for 23 Winds are distinguished examples of contemporary American concert-band compo-

sition. But again it is Percy Grainger who steals the show, this time with a lyrical and wondrously reedy-timbred *Hill Song No. 2*. And again the transparently clean, ultra-wide-range recording is a sonic delight throughout, but particularly so in Grainger's imaginative scoring contrasts and combinations. A simultaneously released stereo version may be even better, but the LP boasts an almost stereoistic breadth and delicacy of tone-coloring differentiation.

**"The Sound of the Goldman Band."** Richard Franko Goldman, cond. Decca DL 8931, \$3.98 (LP); DL 78931, \$4.98 (SD). Almost as offbeat and widely varied a miscellany of original band compositions as Goldman's "Band Masterpieces" of 1958, the present collection is vastly superior

technically, especially in the somewhat less sharply focused but more expansive and richly sonorous stereo edition. Musically, the program is a fascinating hodgepodge, ranging from an old-fashioned but mildly piquant (and Mozartean) Overture in C by Charles Simon Catel (1773-1830) to Honegger's somewhat melodramatic *Marche sur la Bastille* and Prokofiev's fast-stepping *Athletic Festival March*. More conventional are a transcription of Bach's G major Fantasia and Douglas Moore's *The People's Choice* (a march based on a motive from his opera *Baby Doe*). But top honors go to the bandmaster's own fast and catchy *Foundation March* and to Percy Grainger's jaunty, intricately scored *Lads of Wamphray March*, both of which are performed with exceptional verve and precision.

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**"The Spanish Guitars of Laurindo Almeida."** Capitol SP 8521, \$5.98 (SD). Overdubbings usually are of more technical than musical interest, but Almeida's self-duo performances endow his straightforward transcriptions (of the Farruca from Falla's *Three-Cornered Hat*, the Menuet from Ravel's *Tombeau de Couperin*, Granados' *Zambra*, etc.) with richly augmented sonority as well as delectable cross-channel interplays. The best of them is the brisk yet singe-toned Duetto No. 3 from Bach's *Clavierübung*, Part 3. Perhaps even more successful, sonically at least, are the triple-dubbings which also include an alto guitar part: a lilting original divertimento, *Brazilliance No. 1*, and surprisingly atmospheric transcriptions of Debussy's *Clair de lune* and *La plus que lente*. For guitar fanciers especially this disc is a must, not only for the familiar lyricism and warm coloring of Almeida's playing, but above all for the gleaming translucency with which these qualities have been captured in unexaggerated but exquisitely balanced and blended stereoism.

**"Famous Continental Marches."** Band of the Grenadier Guards, Major F. J. Harris, cond. London PS 177, \$4.98 (SD). Like Keilberth's earlier Strauss program of last December, the present stereo disc can be recommended, both musically and sonically, at any price: at \$2.98 it must be emphatically endorsed as an outstanding "best buy." The richly colored and graciously expressive *Morgenblätter* and *Rosen aus dem Süden* here are every bit as delectable as the previous waltz performances, and they are better varied by the inclusion of high-stepping versions of the *Persian March* and *Tritsch-Tratsch* Polka. Here, the monophonic edition approaches the stereo disc more

**"Music of Johann Strauss."** Bamberg Symphony Orchestra, Joseph Keilberth, cond. Telefunken TC 8033, \$1.98 (LP); TCS 18033, \$2.98 (SD). Like Keilberth's earlier Strauss program of last December, the present stereo disc can be recommended, both musically and sonically, at any price: at \$2.98 it must be emphatically endorsed as an outstanding "best buy." The richly colored and graciously expressive *Morgenblätter* and *Rosen aus dem Süden* here are every bit as delectable as the previous waltz performances, and they are better varied by the inclusion of high-stepping versions of the *Persian March* and *Tritsch-Tratsch* Polka. Here, the monophonic edition approaches the stereo disc more



ely in tonal warmth, although, as before, is the latter which is wholly irresistible expansive and buoyant sonorities.

**"The Scots Guards in Stereo."** Lt. Col. Rhodes, cond. Angel S 35792, \$5.98 (SD).

at a pleasure it is to welcome back such ic and performance masterpieces as those comparable "patrols," *Wee MacGregor Gathering of the Clans*—plus Godfrey's ungement of the Slow March from *Les guenots* (with its shouted marching comands), Alford's lilting arrangement of *Libilero*, and eight other hits drawn from the Scotsmen's memorable "On ade," Vols. 1 and 2 (but here divested of air pipes-and-drums selections) of 1956. ese works, which thrilled so many lisers in monophony, are still more imssive in flawlessly processed stereo disc m; and even the Scots Guards' more ent SD releases have never surpassed combined musical and sonic appeal of se earlier triumphs.

**"ive la Marche!"** Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Paul Paray, cond. Mercury R 90211, \$5.95 (SD).

is program was recorded in Detroit's d Orchestral Hall and its sonic warmth tainly justifies the change in location n the Ford Auditorium where most ay-Detroit recordings have been made. e all-symphonic-march program is also ble interpretatively for the crisp ineveness, of exceptionally high speed and ver, and distinctively Gallic qualities of ay's readings. Some of them, like the lioz *Rakóczy* and *Les Troyens* marches, somewhat too mannered for my taste; but e certainly never heard Chabrier's *Marche reuse*, and Saint-Saëns's *Marche héroïque Marche militaire française* played with re brilliance. There is also included a *arseillaise* guaranteed to whip any French n into an ecstasy of patriotic fervor.

**"hant of the Jungle."** Augie Colón and His Ensemble. Liberty LRP 3148, \$3.98 (LP); LST 7148, \$4.98 (SD).

king out on his own, Colón, star bongo yer and bird caller of Martin Denny's "otica" series, wisely abandons (despite implications of his program's title) all d imitations and other pseudo-jungle nd effects to provide a batch of straight- vardly lively little dance pieces in argements featuring marimba, flute, and ide variety of drums. Best are the ncy *Manigua* and *Chant of the Jungle*; successful is *Witch Doctor*, with wailing dless vocals and off-key chimes. But all dozen or so pieces are notable for thmic resiliency. The LP lacks the enious antiphonies of the stereo edition seems more obviously closely miked less atmospheric, but it too is clearly brightly recorded.

**"English Marches"; "Marches militaires françaises."** Military Band, Major Deisenroth, cond. Vox VX 26110, \$3.98 (LP); TVX 426110, \$4.98 (SD); and VX 25950, \$3.98 (LP).

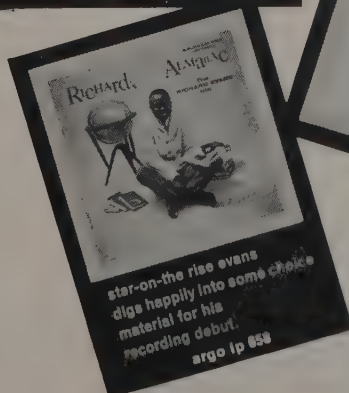
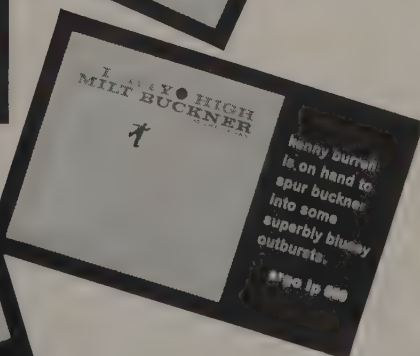
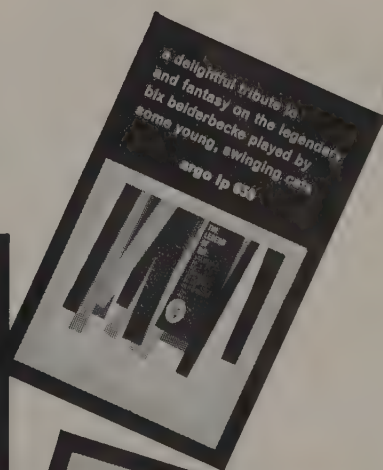
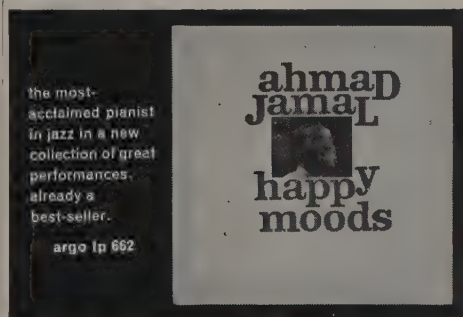
e French program (on VX 25950) not y is exceedingly slapdash and raucous, but so harshly recorded and noisy-surfaced in

monophony that I doubt whether a stereo version possibly can be much more satisfactory. The English Marches, however, restore my faith in both the Major and his players—and the Vox engineers as well. The sonics here are cleanly attractive, if a bit dry and "sharp" even in monophony, and warmly open, more natural and spacious in well-differentiated and balanced stereoism. Deisenroth takes some of his British materials rather solemnly, and his long series of folk and traditional song transcriptions is perhaps more energetic than idiomatic; but he does Coates's *Knightsbridge* and Davies' *R.A.F.* marches with rousing high spirits, the sonics throughout are powerful and brilliant; and if glockenspiel decorations are indulged in overlavishly, at least they add a highly distinctive glitter.

**"Fantastic Percussion."** Ensemble, Felix Slatkin, cond. Liberty LRP 3150, \$3.98 (LP); LST 7150, \$4.98 (SD). Slatkin here invades the pops lists with a

batch of percussive *divertissements* in the now familiar vein first exploited by Jimmy Carroll in Emory Cook's famous—or notorious—*Speed the Parting Guest* of the early hi-fi and binaural era. Needless to say, he is eminently successful even among the best of the recent tinkle-and-crash virtuosos. First of all because he has recruited phenomenally versatile players (his eleven percussionists here include such West-Coast stars as Shelley Manne, William Kraft, and Hal Rees, working out on some one hundred instruments of more than thirty-five types); second, because Liberty's engineers have provided notably crisp, glittering, and markedly stereoistic recording; but perhaps most of all because his arranger, Bill Thompson, has supplied imaginative scorings which not only rely most heavily on the more melodic percussion instruments but enrich these with bass flute, harpsichord, and even that seldom heard but wondrously reedy baritone oboe, the Heckelphone. All twelve pieces are marked by engaging sprightliness, but I particularly relished Thompson's

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"original," *The Happy Hobo*. Even in the monophonic edition, deprived of the SD's cross-channel antiphonies, these performances and recordings are consistently calculated to delight even the hitherto most resistant of percussionphobes.

**Suppé: Overtures (5).** Southwest German Radio Orchestra (Baden-Baden), Tibor Szöke, cond. Vox STVX 425940, \$4.98 (SD).

**Suppé: Overtures (4).** Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Georg Solti, cond. London LL 3139, \$3.98 (LP).

While Vox's orchestra may not be of the very first rank, and while Tibor Szöke is neither as poetic as Henry Krips nor as blazingly virtuosic as Barbirolli and others who have recorded these works, both conductor and men treat with loving care their often disdained or overblown materials. The attractive, quite stereoisitic and reverberant recording beautifully reveals romantic yet never sentimentalized, vivacious yet never overvehement, performances. Solti, on the other hand, seems here to view much of this music with cynical contempt, but audiophiles with a yen for the utmost spread in dynamic and frequency ranges will find the London recording technology sensationally "big" even in monophony. (It is even more sensational in the previously released stereo version.)

**"Music To Break Any Mood."** Dick Schory's New Percussion Ensemble. RCA Victor LPM 2125, \$3.98 (LP). Although the simultaneously released SD (LSP 1866) has so far failed to reach me, I

was providentially supplied with a cartridge (KPS 3076) which confirmed my expectations that brilliant as this *jeu d'esprit* may be in monophony, its full sonic variety and impact can be best relished only in stereo. Like Schory's earlier "Music for Bang, BaaROOM, and Harp," this is more than percussive sensationalism, although certainly is that too. Over one hundred instruments and no less than twelve versatile percussionists are represented here, but the arrangements and novelty pieces are scored with superb imagination and by an unfailingly witty—which is considerably more sophisticated than the merely sophomoric humor—the program's title and jacket photograph would indicate. Again the recording, particularly in stereo, and the spacious Chicago Orchestral Hall acoustics are electrifying; the tremendous gong which opens and closes *Caravan* here would alone insure this program's place of honor in every avid sound fancier's library. But there is much else on the disc that is a consistently lively delight to both one's ears and funny bone.

**Stephen Foster: "Beloved Melodies."** John Gart, Conn Organ; The Southlander. Kapp KL 1140, \$3.98 (LP); KS 302, \$4.98 (SD).

Augmenting an electronic organ with a battery of legitimate percussion instruments (banjo, tambourine, glockenspiel, etc.) does nothing to redeem the schmaltz which Gart deems appropriate to the slow Foster melodies, but even I must admit that the combination brings considerable jauntness to such livelier tunes as *Katy Baker*, *Angelina Baker*, *Oh, Susanna*, etc. The monophonic recording is excellent, but the exaggerated stereoisim of the SD version seems somewhat less dry and of course gives better scope to the cross-channel interplay of organ and percussive timbres.

**"Holiday for Organ."** Harry Farmer, electronic organ. Richmond B 20070, \$1.98 (LP).

If Farmer is an Englishman, as I presume it's apparent that the British Isles have already produced an electronic organ virtuoso who puts most of his American colleagues to shame for sheer high-powered zest and assured precision. The "thudding" tonal qualities and liberally exploited effects are as synthetic as ever to my ears, but it is hard not to be impressed by the breathtaking speed and dash of Farmer's performances. The high-level recording, too, is strikingly brilliant and for once, in this domain, even boasts at least a touch of reverberation. I can only fall back on the cliché of the reviewer's trade: Those who like this kind of thing will like this a lot.

**"The Sacred Idol."** Les Baxter and His Orchestra. Capitol ST 1293, \$4.98 (SD). Baxter's own film score ("strange and exotic music keyed to the mysterious legends of the Feathered Serpent of the Aztecs") sounds merely contrived, if not downright silly when divorced from the spectacles of the movie itself. But his big orchestra (featuring of course marimba, bass flutes, and wordless chorus) does play beautifully, is magnificently recorded, and often effectively exploits the well-marked yet always well-balanced stereoisim.

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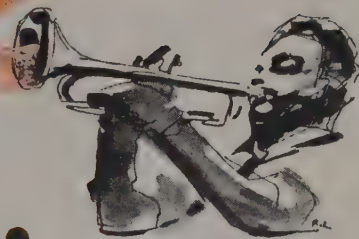
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**Joe Castro Quartet:** "Groove Funk Soul." Atlantic 1324, \$4.98 (LP).

Although Castro, an amiable, unpretentious pianist, here gives evidence of a stronger jazz feeling than he showed on his last Atlantic disc (*Mood Jazz*, Atlantic 1264), he is nonetheless overshadowed throughout the recording by tenor saxophonist Teddy Edwards. Edwards' tone is hard-edged and strident, but his playing is rarely harsh. On the contrary, he has a graceful flow given added effectiveness by his spare attack. He runs through the essential jazz gamut in these pieces—a slow blues, a feathery ballad, and a medium-tempoed blues on which he achieves a joyously riding sound. Edwards, one of the relatively unheralded veterans of jazz, has taken a long time to find the suitable showcase he receives on this disc. Excellent support from Leroy Vinnegar, bass, and Billy Higgins, drums.

**Pete Fountain:** "Pete Fountain Day." Coral 57313, \$3.98 (LP); 757313, \$4.98 (SD). "At the Bateau Lounge," Coral 57314, \$3.98 (LP).

Since it is fashionable to sneer at Lawrence Welk, it's pleasant to be able to say a good word for the beleaguered maestro. The good word concerns the effect of two years of Welk-ing put in by clarinetist Pete Fountain. When Fountain left New Orleans to join Welk's television-land troupe, he was a smooth-toned clarinetist in the best New Orleans tradition. He has now returned to New Orleans hairier and livelier than when he left—he has acquired a toupee, a goatee, and a thorough mastery of the bright swinging style that Benny Goodman used twenty-five years ago. On *Pete Fountain Day*, recorded at a concert for the New Orleans Jazz Club, Fountain's quintet (clarinet, vibes, piano, bass, drums) revives memories of the light, rhythmic brilliance of the early Goodman small groups at their best. And while Fountain has caught the Goodman flavor on clarinet, it does not seem forced at all. It is, apparently, Fountain's style, too. The disc made at the Bateau Lounge by the same group (minus vibes) appears to be aimed at the tourist trade, which responds appropriately by huzzaing and applauding at the wrong times. Both discs have some fine, romping piano solos by Merle Koch and, unfortunately, a few deadly drum solos by Jack Sperling.

**The Original Chico Hamilton Quintet.** World Pacific 1287, \$4.98 (LP). The group formed by Hamilton in 1955 is

heard on this disc in a previously unreleased group of concert performances. For those who have wondered in recent years why the Hamilton Quintet was so highly regarded, these selections provide a helpful reminder. The further Hamilton got away from his original personnel, the more he seemed to dilute the vitality that made the group interesting. This ensemble is a well-integrated, responsive group, lively with ideas and quite obviously enjoying themselves and each other.

**Milt Jackson and Coleman Hawkins:** "Bean Bags." Atlantic 1316, \$4.98 (LP).

Here are brought together two major jazz musicians—Jackson and Hawkins. Of the two, Jackson is the more consistent performer. Hawkins, of course, can play rings around most other tenor saxophonists without exerting much effort. Unfortunately, he has been caught in a languid mood on many of his records—unfortunately, that is, because when he does catch fire he is superb. The company of Jackson and Tommy Flanagan, piano, Kenny Burrell, guitar, Eddie Jones, bass, and Connie Kay, drums, has roused him to some of his more deeply felt performances. He shows the combination of strength, fullness, virility, and sensitive imagination that makes him a tremendously exciting jazzman—exciting without being fraudulently frantic. The tempos here are easygoing and congenial, Jackson swings with his individually gutty grace, and Hawkins is simply masterful, especially on a piece called *Sandra's Blues*. Kay once again shows how much perceptive drumming can do for a group such as this as he lifts and propels it without being intrusive or ostentatious.

**Pete Johnson:** "Pete's Blues." Savoy 14018, \$4.98 (LP).

Originally recorded in 1946 for the National label, this set of performances gives welcome currency to the strong, striding piano playing of Pete Johnson, who has been ill and unable to play for several years. Eight of the selections represent an add-an-instrument gimmick, starting with Johnson alone in a firmly stated blues, then, on successive pieces, adding J. C. Heard, drums, Al Hall, bass, Albert Nicholas, clarinet, Ben Webster, tenor saxophone, Hot Lips Page, trumpet, and J. C. Higginbotham, trombone. Both Nicholas and Page are in unusually good form. The disc is filled out by four selections by another group, worth hearing largely for Don Stovall's compelling alto saxophone work.

**Quincy Jones Orchestra:** "The Great Wide World of Quincy Jones." Mercury 20561, \$3.98 (LP); 60221, \$4.98 (SD).

This second disc by Quincy Jones's big band seems to be closer in its personnel to the band that he has been breaking in in Europe than was his first (although no full personnel is listed). While it shows, as the first disc did, that Jones is building a group with a strong ensemble projection, this time there are some disturbing elements that catch the attention. The most disturbing is the prominent use of flutes, which except for Jerome Richardson's blues-tinged playing on *Esom* produce a sputtery, watery effect in this big-band context. And rhythmically the band often has a matter-of-fact sound. On the other hand, Julius Watkins' French horn appears to great advantage, particularly on *Everybody's Blues*, and Porter Kilbert gives evidence of becoming an interesting and relatively individual alto saxophonist. Possibly too much is being expected of Jones's band. These are good big-band performances—as big bands go today—but there is nothing here to suggest that Jones is going to bring on a revival of interest in big bands.

**Cappy Lewis:** "Get Happy with Cappy." Hi-Fi Jazz 611, \$4.95 (LP).

Lewis, a veteran of the Woody Herman and Tommy Dorsey bands who has been a Hollywood studio musician since 1948, appears for the first time as a leader of his own group. He is a trumpeter of great virtuosity and brilliance and, beyond that, he is strongly rooted in the swing tradition. The combination makes for happily extroverted performances at fast tempos; and when he slows down for pop tunes in the society jazz vein, he retains a virility and crispness that many trumpeters miss when they attempt this style. Jimmy Rowles, piano, Morty Corb, bass, and Jack Sperling, drums, accompany Lewis with the same joyous verve that he shows in his playing.

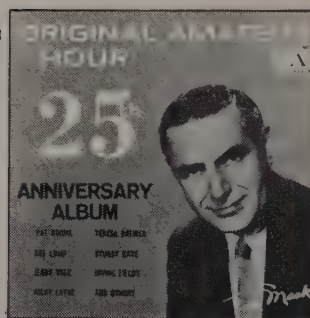
**Harry Lookofsky:** "Stringsville." Atlantic 1319, \$4.98 (LP).

Almost alone among violinists who attempt jazz, Lookofsky does not equate violin jazz with a harsh tone, eccentric stabs, or "hot canary" flights. He plays with a subdued, generally mellow sound, concentrating on his phrasing and the structure of his ideas. And unlike such violinists as Joe Venuti, Stuff Smith, and Eddie South, he is more interested in the modern aspects of jazz than the traditional. He has put together an interesting program on this disc—it includes 'Round

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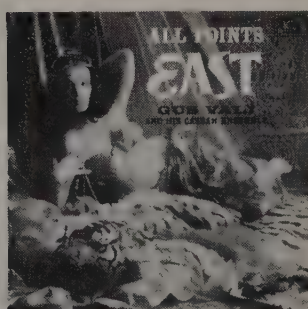
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*Midnight, Moose the Mooche, Little Willie Leaps, and Move*, along with two blues and two standards—and, assisted by a rhythm section headed by Hank Jones plus a few discreet appearances by trombonist Bob Brookmeyer, he presents a very convincing argument for the usefulness of the violin in modern jazz.

**The Metropolitan Jazz Octet:** "The Legend of Bix." Argo 659, \$4.98 (LP).

*The Legend of Bix* comes in two parts—one a group of pieces intended to catch the spirit of some of the musicians who influenced Beiderbecke (Nick LaRocca, Louis Armstrong, King Oliver, Paul Mares, Emmett Hardy); the other, orchestrations of five of his piano compositions. The first section is made up of compactly orchestrated pieces which swing along brightly, putting snatches of familiar material in interesting new settings. The Octet, a group of Chicago musicians, produces cleanly played, highly propulsive ensembles, and Ed Haley takes the trumpet parts in an effective style suggestive of Bix without being imitative. The orchestrated piano pieces, however, are pretty much of a drag and might better have been left as they were.

**The Modern Jazz Quartet:** "Pyramid." Atlantic 1325, \$4.98 (LP).

An unusual view of the Modern Jazz Quartet is offered on this disc because it includes new recordings of two of the group's early successes—*Vendome* and *Django*—along with a new addition to its repertory which has already become a favorite, *Pyramid*. Both the older pieces have taken more positive form in the years since they were first recorded, and *Django* in particular has acquired a stronger, more intensely felt projection. *Pyramid* provides a setting for a strongly blues-grained solo by Milt Jackson and one of John Lewis' increasingly effective piano solos in an extremely spare manner. The high point of the disc, however, is *It Don't Mean a Thing*, played with the subtle combination of feathery lightness and strong, gutty swing which has become typical of the Quartet's playing. It is climaxed by a brilliantly rhythmic, almost Spartan-like solo by Lewis.

**Jelly Roll Morton:** "Plays and Sings." Riverside 12133, \$4.98 (LP).

A companion piece to *Mr. Jelly Lord*, this disc is also made up of selections from Morton's twelve-disc Library of Congress series. Unlike that first disc, devoted to piano solos, Morton sings occasionally on this one but rarely to any great purpose. The meat of the disc is his piano playing. He ventures into foreign waters a few times, playing standards such as *Panama*, *Ain't Misbehavin'*, and *Darktown Strutters' Ball*, but he is at his best on his own pieces—*Freakish*, *Original Jelly Roll Blues*, and *Wolverine Blues*. His masterful demonstration of how to transform *Miserere* to Jelly Roll style is a high point of the collection.

**Bernard Peiffer:** "Plays Cole Porter's 'Can-Can.'" Laurie 1008, \$3.98 (LP); S 1008, \$5.98 (SD). "The Pied Peiffer of the Piano," Decca 9218, \$3.98 (LP).

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indication of having reached a point where he must be accepted as one of today's major jazz pianists. Yet that expected emergence has not actually happened. These two discs do nothing to deny his readiness. His collection of Porter tunes is marked by his quirk-some imagination, the deceptive simplicity to which he has honed his once overbearing virtuoso technique, and an exceptional rhythmic drive. The Decca set is paler stuff with a tendency to misty moodiness and a rather garrulous ambling that seem at odds with the directness and economy of most of his recent records. Both discs, however, have definite character and are positive expressions of an interesting and individual musical personality.

**Oscar Peterson:** "Swinging Brass." Verve 8364, \$4.98 (LP); 6119, \$5.98 (SD).

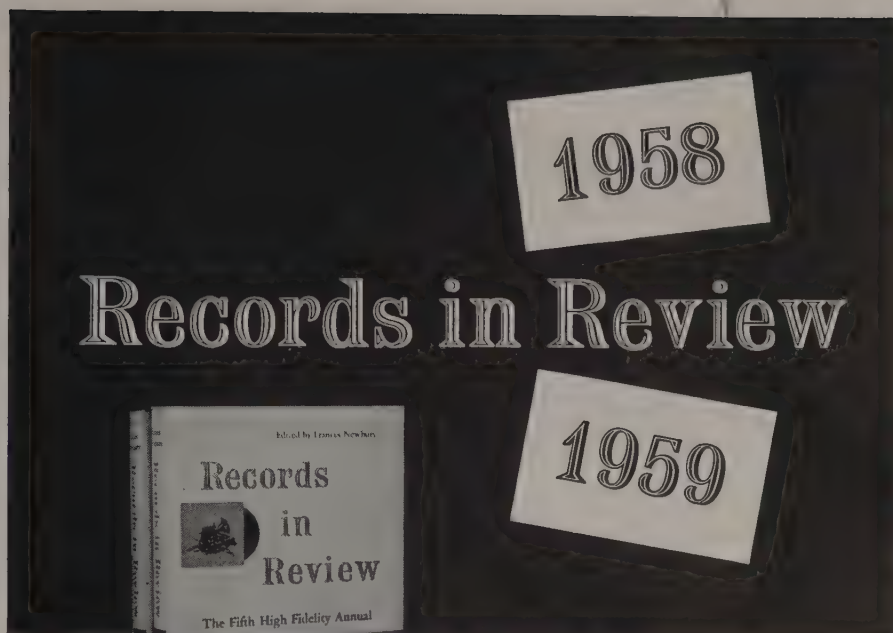
As one who has long been dismayed by the shallow, surface qualities of Oscar Peterson's piano work in small groups, I find it a distinct pleasure to hear his always obvious technical assets being put to really effective use in this big-band setting. Russell Garcia has written arrangements which remove Peterson's usual tendency towards flipness, which almost force him to peel off the empty façade he customarily shows and to get down to the simple, basic business of playing moving jazz piano. It is good big-band writing (unusually imaginative in the treatment of *Close Your Eyes*, a swinging surprise, and *Con Alma*), and Peterson shows he actually is the fine jazz pianist his adherents have insisted that he is.

**Julian Priester:** "Keep Swingin'." Riverside 12316, \$4.98 (LP).

Priester is a trombonist with a big, dark tone and a conception more lyrical than that of most current trombonists. There are suggestions of Curtis Fuller in much of his work, particularly when he uses a mute. He is teamed here with Jimmy Heath, a tenor saxophonist who has a positive, assertive attack but a limited scope of ideas, and a rhythm section made up of Tommy Flanagan, Sam Jones, and Elvin Jones. They have turned out a group of capably played performances which, collectively, fail to rouse any special interest.

**Freddie Redd Quartet:** "The Music from 'The Connection.'" Blue Note 4027, \$4.98 (LP).

*The Connection* is an off-Broadway play about junkies which has been running since last July. The music heard in it (it is not quite a score in the usual sense) was composed by pianist Freddie Redd and is played in the show by his quartet, which includes Jackie McLean on alto saxophone. This is far stronger jazz than has yet been heard on Broadway, played with relish and conviction by Redd's excellent group. Redd is a searing soloist at times, and McLean—heretofore an imitative, uncertain, but improving saxophonist—shows real individuality and creativity for the first time on records. It is interesting to note that the essential structure of these pieces is much like numerous studio performances in which McLean, in particular, has been involved, but these are far superior to those offhand studio efforts largely because, one suspects, they were thoroughly shaken down by months of playing before they were re-



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corded. This happens so infrequently in jazz recording (the Modern Jazz Quartet is the only group that makes it a policy) that it is worth noticing what wonders proper preparation can produce.

Annie Ross: "A Gasser." World Pacific  
1285, \$4.98 (LP); S1285, \$4.98 (SD).

Annie Ross's recorded solo ventures away from the Lambert, Hendricks, and Ross trio have until now been extremely disappointing in view of the imagination and vitality that she shows with the trio. But these qualities finally come through in some selections on this disc—notably on *Everything I've Got Belongs to You, Nobody's Baby*, and *Lucky Day* (on the latter there are some delightful suggestions of a Pearl Bailey influence at work). The real indication of Miss Ross's arrival as a solo performer, however, is the mixture of warmth and pulsation with which she sings a ballad, *I Didn't Know About You*, for her worst problems have been with slow ballads. She has the inestimable help of a strong rhythm section and the unquenchably swinging Zoot Sims. Even so, there are still times when Miss Ross descends to her earlier flat style, and then not even these musicians can save her.

Charlie Shavers Quartet: "Girl of My Dreams." Everest 5070, \$3.98 (LP); 1070, \$3.98 (SD).

Charlie Shavers' version of the Jonah Jones brand of East Side jazz is frequently several cuts above Jones's efforts because of the fire and bite that Shavers brings to his playing. But it is the presence of pianist Ray Bryant which raises this disc distinctly above the bland level of most recordings of this type. Bryant is tied up in shuffle rhythm on some of these tracks, but when he shakes loose he plays refreshingly forthright, swinging piano.

Zoot Sims: "The Art of Jazz." Seeco 452, \$3.98 (LP).

This disc was originally released on the Dawn label (as *The Modern Art of Jazz*) but has been out of circulation for a while. It's worth remarking on its return, for Sims and trombonist Bob Brookmeyer romp through these pieces in delightful fashion. This is Sims at his swinging best and he seems to have induced an unwonted liveliness in the sometimes moribund Brookmeyer. And there's a fine rhythm section behind them—John Williams, piano, Milt Hinton, bass, and Gus Johnson, drums.

Art Tatum: "The Art Tatum Discoveries." 20th Century Fox 3029, \$3.98 (LP).

An unexpected bonus for the presumably closed discography of the late Art Tatum is represented by this well-recorded set of performances, taped at a California party shortly before the pianist's death. They represent a bonus not only in the actual addition they make to the total of Tatum recordings but also in a qualitative sense. They reveal the relaxed, after-hours Tatum as he has rarely been shown on records—playing with all his virtuosic skill yet seemingly more involved personally in his playing than usual, and quite obviously, from his chuckles and sly musical asides, enjoying himself immensely. It's a refreshing and extremely valuable set.

JOHN S. WILSON

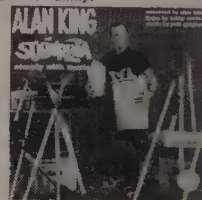
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HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE





# the Tape Deck

Reviewed by R. D. DARRELL

The following reviews are of 4-track 7.5-ips stereo tapes in normal reel form.

**BEETHOVEN: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 4, in G, Op. 58***

Friedrich Wührer, piano; Bamberg Symphony Orchestra, Jonel Perlea, cond.

• • Vox XTC 702. 33 min. \$7.95.

**BEETHOVEN: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 5, in E flat, Op. 73 ("Emperor")***

Robert Riefling, piano; Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra, Odd Grüner-Hegge, cond.

• • TANDBERG SMS S31. 37 min. \$8.95.

The wealth of recorded duplications of these two best-known Beethoven piano concertos is so strongly dominated by the sales appeal of more famous virtuosos and conductors that the modest—yet substantially rewarding—merits of less familiar artists tend all too easily to be overlooked. Neither of the present versions is top-rank, admittedly, yet each of them is richly satisfactory in every respect and particularly so to listeners more intent on a straightforward exposition of the music itself than on soloists' displays of personality and bravura. Riefling's and Grüner-Hegge's unmannered geniality and grace give us a less grand and brilliant *Emperor* than we usually hear, but one that is notably endearing in its unpretentious simplicity; and the Wührer-Perlea Fourth is even more delectable for its restrained yet expressive warmth and limpidity. Both works are admirably recorded in unexaggerated stereoism and gleamingly natural tonal qualities, but the more reverberant Vox tape is a special delight to one's ears for its sonic richness and depth.

**HINDEMITH: *Kleine Kammermusik, Op. 24, No. 2***

†Danz: *Quintet for Winds, Op. 67, No. 2*

New York Woodwind Quintet.

• • CONCERTAPES 4T 3015. 29 min. \$6.95.

Of all Hindemith's early works, none wears better than his mildly hard-boiled, saucily piquant *Kleine Kammermusik* for flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, and French horn. And although there have been several excellent recordings, this is one of the most incisive, lyrical, and brightly colored; more importantly, it is the only one so far in stereo—which for this combination of precisely differentiated timbres is less a sonic enhancement than a vital necessity. The brilliant recording itself shows no sign of age (despite the fact that it first appeared in a two-track taping some years ago), but it is interesting to note that the even cleaner present processing clearly reveals that a moment of over-

loading (suspected earlier in a couple of overintense passages in the first movement of the Danzi Quintet) is obviously inherent in the master tape. A more serious criticism is of the "breaking" of the "sides" after, rather than before, this first movement of the Danzi work, which, for all its naïve charm, sounds particularly old-fashioned when it follows so closely on the far more sophisticated music of Hindemith.

**MOZART: *Quintet for Horn and Strings, in E flat, K. 407; Quartet for Oboe and Strings, in F, K. 370***

John Barrows, French horn; Ray Still, oboe; Members of the Fine Arts Quartet.

• • CONCERTAPES 4T 3016. 32 min. \$6.95.

What a joy it is to hear again, in an even more purely processed taping, these buoyant masterpieces which were among the first convincing proofs of stereo's delectable airiness in their two-track versions, and which still remain preëminent in the scanty and uneven stereo chamber-music repertory. Few records available today in any form can be more confidently guaranteed to provide inexhaustible delight to ears and heart alike.

**SHOSTAKOVICH: *Symphony No. 1, in F, Op. 10; Prelude No. 14, in E flat minor (orch. Stokowski); Lady Macbeth of Mzensk: Entr'acte***

Symphony of the Air, Leopold Stokowski, cond.

• • UNITED ARTISTS UATC 2209. 38 min. \$7.95.

Warmly as old-timers may greet this metamorphosized revival of one of Stokowski's greatest triumphs of the early Thirties, it should have an even livelier appeal to young audiophiles of today: partly because it is still the best introduction to Shostakovich (and one of his most immediately appealing works), but still more as an example of the

finest stereo technology, especially impressive for the exquisite delicacy of its low-level passages as well as for the powerful impact of its dynamic climaxes. The Symphony of the Air sounds positively inspired here, and Stokowski's reading of the symphony itself strikes me as having grown notably in both humor and grace. His somber piano prelude transcription and saucy *Lady Macbeth* Entr'acte (still the only available recorded representation of that controversial opera) are strictly minor attractions in comparison with those of the youthful symphony. Happily they precede the major work in the tape sequence, which is broken, for side changing, at the best possible place: between the biting scherzoso second and songful third movements.

**STRAUSS, RICHARD: *Ein Heldenleben, Op. 40***

London Symphony Orchestra, Leopold Ludwig, cond.

• • EVEREST T4 3038. 42 min. \$7.95.

Like everyone on whom *A Hero's Life* first burst in Mengelberg's incomparable pyrotechnics, I have yet to hear anyone else play it as well—or perhaps succeed as persuasively in transcending its undeniable aesthetic weaknesses. But neither of the great Dutchman's own recordings, nor any monophonic version since, could do full sonic justice to this exceptionally thick and convoluted score. Reiner perhaps came closest in one of the first two-track stereo tapes (1955), but his version is now clearly surpassed by the present outstandingly effective Everest technology, which not only provides the enormously wide dynamic and frequency ranges essential here, but also (thanks to well-defined stereoism and fairly close miking) a more lucid disentangling of the complex textures than is normally possible even in the concert hall.

Ludwig's performance, for all its sturdy vitality, may lack the utmost in swaggering *élan*; the unidentified violin soloist is perhaps more sentimental than skittish; and there should be greater serenity in the richly expressive closing pages. But it is a joy to hear so many unsuspected felicitous details, and that without any loss in sonic strength (particularly in the magnificent writing for low strings and percussion) or warmth (particularly from a truly golden horn choir). Some listeners will observe that the right and left channels have been interchanged—presumably in the tape processing, since I have seen no mention of this in stereo disc reviews. Actually, it matters not at all, since the more significant stereo virtues are so paramount here.



*The New York Woodwind Quintet.*

*Continued on next page*

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## TAPE DECK

*Continued from preceding page*

### STRAVINSKY: *Pétouchka*

London Symphony Orchestra, Sir Eugene Goossens, cond.

● ● EVEREST T4 3033. 27 min. \$7.95.

No matter how many *Pétouchkas* he may have already, or how fine at least several of these may be, every true Stravinskian owes it to himself to hear the present version, which is no less straightforward than the composer's own reading—and considerably more eloquent. Other conductors may have done certain sections or passages more excitingly, but probably none combine precision, delicacy, and sinewy strength more adroitly than Goossens. And surely none has enjoyed more blazingly brilliant, expansively stereoisitic recording, and vividly authentic concert hall presence.

"At the Crescendo" and "Mr. Cha-Cha-Cha." René Touzet, His Piano, Choruses, and Orchestra. GNP FTP 1101, 66 min., \$11.95.

This double-header's recording company (Gene Norman Presents) and Sunset-Strip orchestra are both new to me, but each of them makes a notably favorable impression here: the former with extremely realistic yet warmly glowing recording (particularly in the on-the-spot first program); the latter with its rhythmic precision, vivid sonority, and effective use of both a seven-man Cuban and five-man American vocal ensemble. The first side is topped by Touzet's own festive *Mariana* and *Amor de Pelicula*; the second by lilting cha-cha arrangements of *Andalucia* and *Julie Is Her Name*; but, throughout, the playing is invigoratingly toe-tickling.

"Breakfast Dance and Barbecue." Count Basie and His Orchestra. Roulette RTC 509, 35 min., \$7.95.

One of the less newsworthy but most musically worthwhile features of the now notorious 1959 Disc Jockeys' Convention in Miami was the Basie band's morning-after-the-night-before breakfast dance, eight performances from which (including two featuring Joe Williams' blues shouting) are admirably documented here. The playing is powerful yet relaxed, with the five-man sax choir in brilliant form throughout, but with everybody of his particular best in a jumpy, rowdy *Counter Block* and a more easily songful *Moten Swing*—with plaintive *sotto voce* passages effectively contrasted with explosive tutti and percussive interjections, all openly and strongly recorded with unusually solid weight to the brass and drums parts.

"Flower Drum Song." Soloists, Gene Sands Chorus; Sound Stage Orchestra, Dean Franconi, cond. Telectro TT 403, 39 min., \$4.98.

A bargain-price reel that also comes closer to matching the attractions of the full-length original cast recording than any other *Flower Drum* albums I've heard. With the probable exception of Bill Heyer, in Sammy Fong's role, the cast is all Chinese-American, and all possess engagingly fresh and attrac-

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tive voices, personalities which aren't submerged in slavish imitations of the original stars, exceptionally intelligible enunciation, and consistently unmannered assurance and verve. They are perhaps restricted too closely to strongly left- or right-channel locations, or cross-channel duos, and Franconi's orchestra is somewhat nondescript, but the recording is clean and bright; and the pervading spirit of enthusiasm will be hard to resist.

**"Furioso!"** Sabicas, Dolores Vargas; Los Compañeros del Flamenco. Decca ST7 8900, 43 min., \$7.95.

One of the best of the many fine Sabicas releases, thanks partly to the uncommonly bold, solid, and ultrastereoistic closely miked recording, but mainly to its programmatic variety. Sabicas himself plays as brilliantly as ever in his featured solos, but he costars the deservedly nicknamed "Gypsy Thunderbolt," Dolores Vargas, and a gifted ensemble of guitarists and dancers. I am not particularly impressed with Miss Vargas' singing, although it is obviously in the best flamenco tradition, but her machine-gun-rattling castanets and vehement stamping are electrifying. And Los Compañeros' vibrant massed-guitar sonorities add almost a superfluity of both sonic and musical excitement to *Aires de San Fernando*, *La Castanuelo*, and *Arabesca*. The only trouble with this program is that it leaves its listeners completely exhausted.

**"The Herd Rides Again . . . In Stereo."** Woody Herman and His Orchestra. Everest T4 1009, 41 min., \$7.95.

With a seventeen-man band largely recruited from First-Herd alumni, many of the famous 1945-46 arrangements are reanimated here in the familiar hard-driving jump style, now given enhanced impact by extremely powerful and stereoistic recording. I like best the relatively relaxed, jauntier playing in *It's Coolin' Time*, *Crazy Rhythm*, and *Blowin' Up a Storm* (at least before the last-named's overstrident end), but the most strikingly distinctive performances on the present tape are undoubtedly the far-out Ralph Burn's *divertissements*, *Fire Island* and *Bijou*, with trombonist Bob Brookmeyer starring in the place of Bill Harris.

**"Hits I Missed."** Ted Heath and His Orchestra. London LPM 70007, 35 min., \$6.95.

One of the best British dance orchestras, cleanly and openly recorded in exceptionally adroit and effective arrangements of *High Noon*, *Twelfth Street Rag*, *Swedish Rhapsody*, *Moulin Rouge*, and eight other familiar pieces in performances of notable distinction both for their rhythmic verve and their gleaming orchestral coloring.

**"Kid Ory Plays W. C. Handy."** Verve VSTC 228, 46 min., \$7.95.

The Kid's own trombone growls and exults with its old hoarse eloquence, but except for Teddy Buchner's and Cedric Haywood's occasionally brilliant trumpet and piano contributions, the solos by the other sidemen (Caughey Roberts, clarinet; Charles Ogden, bass; and Jesse John Sailes, drums) have little

*Continued on next page*

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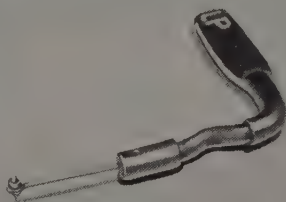
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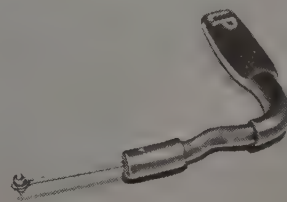
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## TAPE DECK

*Continued from preceding page*

distinction, and most of the free-for-all tuttis rely too heavily on well-worn Dixieland formulas. The best of the nine performances (*Harlem Blues*, *Yellow Dog Blues*, *Way Down South*, and *Loveless Love*) do, however, boast moments of engaging jauntiness, and the recording is brilliantly clean and detailed throughout.

**"Marches of Sousa."** Band of the Grenadier Guards, Major F. J. Harris, cond. London LPM 70016, 29 min., \$6.95.

Reviewing the stereo disc edition of this program nearly a year ago, I probably was very ungenerous in laughing it off—in comparison with a similar Goldman Band release—as characteristic of a "John Bull . . . roast beef and buttermilk" Sousa. I still deny that these mellifluous readings are at all idiomatically right, but sheerly as military band performances, they are as assured and richly colored as any on record. And the smoothness, directionality, and warmth of the recording itself are even more evident on tape than they were in the SD version. Certainly no other band recording I know is easier on, or more attractive to, one's ears, yet there is no lack of solid sonic substance either.

**"Odds Against Tomorrow."** Original Sound Track, John Lewis, cond. United Artists UATC 2206, 44 min., \$7.95.

**Music from "Odds Against Tomorrow."** The Modern Jazz Quartet, United Artists UATC 2205, 32 min., \$7.95.

The sound track of John Lewis' second film score, played by a twenty-two-man orchestra in which members of his own quartet have occasional solo roles, is one of the most tantalizing examples of modern music I have ever encountered: far too fragmentarily episodic to be really satisfying, yet never lacking in dazzling flashes of wholly fresh (except for a momentary echo of *Sacre* rhythms) musical and sonic originality. Certainly few if any contemporary film scores have ever achieved such moments of electrifying atmospheric evocation as those in the strange *Looking at the Caper* and *Social Call*, or the enchanting *Skaters in Central Park*. Yet since so much else of the sound track is almost necessarily unsatisfying apart from the film itself, there are far more substantial rewards in the longer, poetically restrained yet rhapsodical treatments of some of these materials in the program by the quartet alone, in which Lewis' own piano playing and Milt Jackson's vibraharp never have been more lyrically exploited. The recording in both reels is luminously pure, but with the exquisitely colored quartet performances it achieves the transparency and authentic presence of sheer stereo perfection.

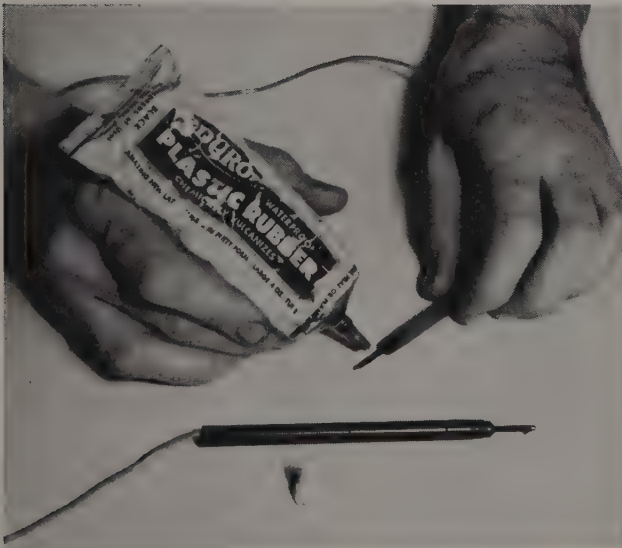
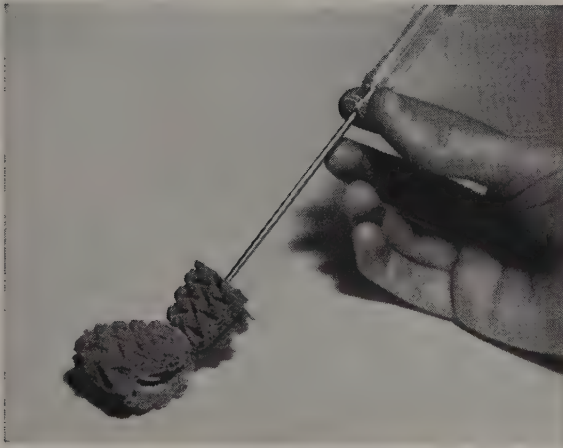
**"Swinging Standards."** Buddy Bregman and His Orchestra. World Pacific WPTC 1003, 34 min., \$7.95.

Unpretentious but richly colored and danceable big-band versions of such favorites as *It's All Right with Me*, *Imagination*, *All of You*, and seven others, all played in effective arrangements and recorded in boldly broad-spread and naturally open stereoism.

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE



# HINTS



**P**ractical tips that will cost you next to nothing. Top right, a felt weather-stripping "brush" to keep your high-fidelity chassis clean. The "brush," aided in its work by an occasional drop of oil, is cleaned with a dry cloth. Medium-grit sandpaper, cemented to wood disc attached to plug to fit solder spool will keep the tip of your soldering iron pristine—shown in photo top left. Center: when inspection mirror is not in use, wrap with strip of foam rubber or plastic sponge; secure with rubber band. No more cracked or broken mirrors. Finally, a coating of Duro plastic rubber for prod tips (except the very ends) will reduce chances of serious short circuits.

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Stereo Preamplifier HF85††



FM Tuner HFT90††  
AM Tuner HFT94††  
FM/AM Tuner HFT92††



100W Stereo Power Amplifier HF89  
70W Stereo Power Amplifier HF87  
28W Stereo Power Amplifier HF86



Stereo Integrated Amplifier AF4††



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**New AF-4 Economy Stereo Integrated Amplifier** provides clean 4W per channel or 8W total output. Kit \$38.95. Wired \$64.95. Incl. cover & F.E.T.

**HF12 Mono Integrated Amplifier** (not illus.): Complete "front end" facilities & true hi-fi performance. 12W continuous, 25W peak. Kit \$34.95. Wired \$57.95. Incl. cover.

**New HFS3 3-Way Speaker System Semi-Kit** complete with factory-built 3/4" veneered plywood (4 sides) cabinet. Bellows-suspension, full-inch excursion 12" woofer. (22 cps res.) 8" mid-range speaker with high internal damping cone for smooth response, 3 1/2" cone tweeter. 2 1/4 cu. ft. ducted-port enclosure. System Q of 1/2 for smoothest frequency & best transient response. 32-14,000 cps clean, useful response. 16 ohms impedance. HWD: 26 1/2", 13 7/8", 14 3/8". Unfinished birch. Kit \$72.50. Wired \$84.50. Walnut, mahogany or teak. Kit \$87.50. Wired \$99.50.

**New HFS5 2-Way Speaker System Semi-Kit** complete with factory-built 3/4" veneered plywood (4 sides) cabinet. Bellows-suspension, 5/8" excursion, 8" woofer (45 cps. res.), & 3 1/2" cone tweeter. 1 1/4 cu. ft. ducted-port enclosure. System Q of 1/2 for smoothest freq. & best transient resp. 45-14,000 cps clean, useful resp. 16 ohms.

HWD: 24", 12 1/2", 10 1/2". Unfinished birch. Kit \$47.50. Wired \$56.50. Walnut, mahogany or teak. Kit \$59.50. Wired \$69.50.

**HFS1 Bookshelf Speaker System** complete with factory-built cabinet. Jensen 8" woofer, matching Jensen compression-driver exponential horn tweeter. Smooth clean bass; crisp extended highs. 70-12,000 cps range, 8 ohms. HWD: 23" x 11" x 9". Kit \$39.95. Wired \$47.95.

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CIRCLE 36 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



# High Fidelity Newsfronts



by RALPH FREAS

**Free Replacement:** Speaking to the people at H. H. Scott isn't easy these days. They are busy improving the old and developing the new. Take the London-Scott pickup, for example. The factory has found a way to improve the temper of the armature which permits the pickup's moving part to take more abuse. Does this make the old pickup obsolete?

"It sure does," Herman Scott told us, "but we're replacing the old with the new at no cost to the user."

So if you are a London-Scott user, take the old cartridge back to your dealer or return it to Scott for a replacement. You can distinguish between the old and new by the color of the cartridge case. The old model is black; the new, more rugged model is red.

By the way, in what other product line would you expect to benefit from factory improvements at no cost? We can't think of a one.

**About "Live" and "Dead" Rooms:** Paul Weathers was recently our host at his Barrington, New Jersey plant and offices. He treated us to a sound demonstration that was little short of sensational. Ostensibly, Paul was showing off the latest variant of the Weathers ceramic pickup, but our attention wandered to the speakers, hidden behind a sheer wall-to-wall drapery.

"What have you got back there?" we wanted to know.

Paul smiled and opened the drapes to reveal a pair of those tiny book-type speakers he developed when stereo came along. We felt tricked. It didn't seem likely that all that sound came from the Weathers speaker system. Examining the room itself, we gained an insight into Weathers' "magic." The listening portion of the room, two-thirds of the total area, had been completely deadened by drapery, carpeting, and acoustic tile. The remaining third was completely live, and the "book" speakers were placed exactly between the treated and untreated parts of the room.

"This room is what does it," we claimed with an air of great discovery.

"Uh-huh," said the patient Mr. Weathers, "*any* room will affect *any* system. This room approximates a condition most people have in their own homes. The living room is usually quite dead, while the dining area is relatively live. Put those speakers between the two areas and you'll probably approximate this brand of sound."

Room acoustics is a fairly complex subject, and in the time we had to spend we couldn't hope to explore fully the reasons for the kind of sound Paul Weathers created with this special conditioning. The important thing is, it works. Try it for yourself.

**Who Needs Service?** You'd think, wouldn't you, that with all the amateur technicians putting amplifier and tuner kits together the kit makers would have a service problem of tremendous proportions on their hands. Not so. David Hafler escorted us through his Dyna plant not long ago and we noticed a lonely fellow sitting in a corner with a bench full of test instruments before him.

"Who's that?" we asked.

"That," said Hafler, "is our national service department."

"One man?"

"One man," Hafler affirmed.

All of which left us with a high regard for the engineer who works out the circuitry and the writer who puts together the instruction manual. Did we forget someone? Oh, yes—the not-so-average guy who isn't afraid to pick up a soldering iron and tackle what looks like (but really isn't) a terrifyingly technical task. Like we said: Who needs service?

**Paradox:** "Stereomonic" sounds like a contradiction in terms. The label has been pinned to a new type of amplifier (for juke boxes), designed "to obtain stereophonic effects from monaural recordings," according to the highly enthusiastic manufacturer.

**Seen at the Parts Show:** A tape deck and transistorized, battery-operated tape recorder from the West German firm, Uher . . . a tape recorder kit and a 100-watt stereo amplifier kit by EICO . . . "customized" metal phono bases for most record changers produced by Audiotex . . . an FM tuner kit from Dyna with provision for aligning by the kit builder . . . a 25-watt transistorized amplifier and a new two-speed, two-motor turntable from Weathers Industries. More next month on new products seen at the Chicago Parts Show.

. . . Three . . . Two . . . One . . . **Blast-Off:** Lester Karg, the FM tuner manufacturer, has been doing a heap of thinking about outer space. At a down-to-earth lunch the other day he was musing aloud about satellite communications.

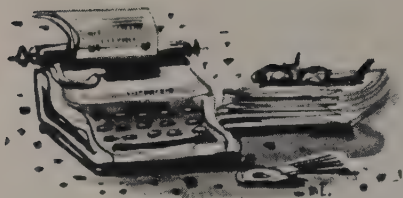
"The wave length used by our space program is right next to the FM band," said Karg, "and a lot of the experimentation being done by our government should turn up design information that can apply to consumer products."

"Just think. That five-watt transmitter in our space probe can be heard from a distance of 2,000,000 miles, while we never know from day to day what kind of reception we're going to get from a distance of ninety miles with today's FM receivers."

We raised the question of antennas. Don't the monster soup-dish antennas make long-distance reception possible?

"Narrow-beam or high-gain antennas are certainly part of it," Karg said, "but not all. There are new concepts in receivers, devices which don't use tubes at all. We're working on something that looks like a stovepipe."

And having tossed out that scrap of information, he looked mysterious and turned his attention back to his chopped sirloin. But Lester Karg's mind wasn't on food. In our opinion, he was probably thinking, "Five watts. 2,000,000 miles. Five watts. 2,000,000 miles . . ."



## Letters to the Audio Editor

### On Copy and Curves

SIR:

I would like to congratulate you on your new test policy. The fact that products are taken from dealers' shelves rather than being accepted from manufacturers, that the manufacturer does not have the opportunity to kill the report prior to publication, and that the reports are made by a group possessing integrity and skill are elementary to the cause of meaningful testing.

I think the H. H. Labs.' report on our AR-2a speaker was (with one reservation) an accurate one. I am afraid, however, that some people may come away with an inaccurate impression if they glance at the curves and do not read the copy carefully.

The harmonic distortion curve (how refreshing to see a speaker report which covers the unmentionable subject) is slightly better than the ones we publish, but very similar. Your frequency response curve for the AR-2a, however, bears little relation to our published curves. It is far more ragged than ours, and the treble is shown as attenuated more than 30 db (that is, gone) at 20,000 cps, where we show on-axis response within 1½ db to 20,000 cps.

The H. H. Labs.' report states clearly that "the supertweeter response is such that our microphone is incapable of measuring its limits . . . the response curve of the 1½-in. diameter hemispherical radiator faithfully follows the mike curve." But the fact remains that the response between 15 and 20 kc is published by HIGH FIDELITY as falling off sharply, and, as mentioned previously, a false impression could be gained if one read the curves and not the copy.

H. H. Labs. also states clearly that the severe peaks and dips are interference effects between the speakers, effects which do not represent listening quality. Our published AR-2a curve identifies the treble response as having been derived from a separate curve taken with one tweeter, and the supertweeter response is also shown separately. If a frequency response curve is to give actual information on the actual performance of a multispeaker system, I see no alternative to running separate curves for each driver, other than using very large microphone distances or reverberant, instead of free field, conditions.

Our own published response curve for the AR-2a, like the report, shows a somewhat depressed presence range. I won't pretend that this was introduced on purpose—speakers are recalcitrant animals. H. H. Labs. would, however, have found less of a de-

pression if it had made measurements free of interference effects between woofer and midrange tweeters. This last is the only conclusion of the report that I have any disagreement with, and this in degree rather than substance.

Edgar Villchur  
Acoustic Research, Inc.  
Cambridge, Mass.

Hirsch-Houck Labs. is in complete accord with Mr. Villchur's comment and states that the only reason for not measuring each driver separately is one of practicality. Hirsch-Houck also agrees that, since their microphone is incapable of measuring the upper limits of the supertweeter (as pointed out in the test report), the curve should have been lopped off at 15 kc. The upper portion of the curve as published is unfair to the AR-2a.—Ed.

### Good for the Price

SIR:

As national sales agents for the Lesa CD2/21 record changer (May Equipment Reports), we read the findings of H. H. Labs. with more than ordinary interest. In general, the report is statistically accurate. However, we are at a loss to understand two things:

1) The report states that, "in respect to rumble, flutter, and wow, [the Lesa] is not as satisfactory as several more expensive record changers." This is the same as saying that if you pay twice as much money, you'll get more for it—a fact surely apparent to your readers. We would like to point out that there are more expensive units that, according to your own published reports, exhibit more flutter and wow than the Lesa. The Lesa sells for only \$39.95, more than ten per cent lower in price than the nearest competitive imported changer.

2) The report also states that "moving the overhead record balance to its side position . . . does not disable the trip mechanism . . . and it is not possible to start playing near the inside of the record." This is simply not so.

Seymour Meyer  
Electrophono & Parts Corp.  
New York, N. Y.

We agree that, at the price, the Lesa offers good value. Hirsch-Houck reports that the unit tested did not disable the trip mechanism when the overhead record balance was moved to the side position. On units we examined at the Lesa offices, the trip disablers operated uniformly without difficulty.—Ed.

### Comparative Judgments

SIR:

We applaud HIGH FIDELITY's efforts to provide more—and more accurate—test data when reviewing loudspeaker performance. We appreciate the difficulty encountered when tests that describe the speaker's performance do not necessarily answer the reader's question "how good is the unit in comparison with brand X?" The judgment of absolute speaker quality based on a large number of complex variables is not to be undertaken lightly and represents a real challenge to the audio industry.

Robert C. Avedon  
Electro-Voice, Inc.  
Buchanan, Mich.

### Vigorous? We Hope So

SIR:

I want to compliment you on your April issue. The new placement and the new vigor in the reviews of equipment are refreshing.

Irving M. Fried  
Electronics  
Philadelphia, Pa.

SIR:

I like your new Equipment Reports. There is a minimum of equivocation. They are direct, frank, and capably done. It's good to see this type of testing and reporting in a popular consumer publication.

Saul J. White  
Rek-O-Kut Company  
Corona, New York

### Sorry, Can't Oblige

SIR:

Since you are pioneering in giving the public unbiased laboratory figures on loudspeaker performance, would it not be a good idea to orient your readers by printing an analysis of some really fine speaker systems; perhaps one of the high-efficiency horn or bass-reflex types, one of the large infinite baffle type, and one of the acoustic suspension type? The idea would be to give a fair portrayal of the best available, commercially, in the present state of the art.

J. Kellum Smith, Jr.  
New York, N. Y.

Uh-huh. If the idea appeals to readers, they can scan our index of past speaker reports (December issue, page 162). As for the currently "best available," our point of view on labeling individual components "best" is spelled out in our April editorial.





Philip Olson Photo



### THE UNIVERSAL URGE TO MAKE MUSIC...

The drive to create, perform, and reproduce music is common to all men—a drive so basic that when a man cannot find an instrument to suit him, he makes his own.

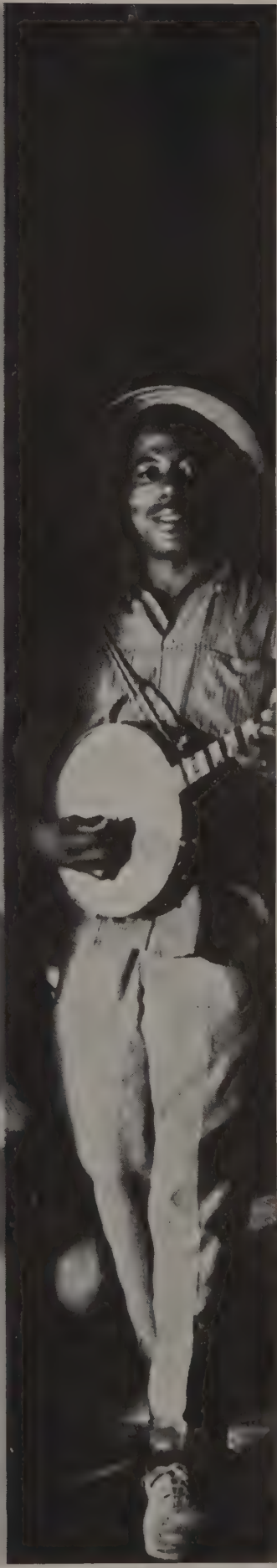
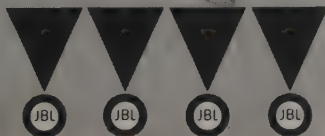
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## LEONARD WARREN

Continued from page 39

ultimate refinement of detail. He never vocalized, except for three or four agonized days each fall after his usual self-imposed two-month summer silence. Never a vocalise or an exercise, never a warm-up; he just got into costume, went on stage, and sang. That he sang with such superb skill is the wonder of it, but that was precisely why he could afford to squander his efforts elsewhere.

It must be admitted, too, that whatever his methods, his characterizations matured and deepened with time. Vocally sumptuous and compelling from his debut, his performances were ultimately honed to interpretations of overpowering perception and impact. Examine what he did with Iago in *Otello*. Where earlier he was content merely with making lovely sounds while wearing a nasty sneer, by the late Fifties he had created a rich portrait of baseless evil intelligence. He delivered "*Era la notte*" in a quietly terrifying *mezza voce*, and throughout kept Iago functioning on the many complex levels implicit in both Shakespeare and Boito. By the time of the latest revival, Warren was able to carry off the dramatic coup of performing much of the role with his back to the audience, letting the results of his villainy register on his fellow-artists' faces while he himself maintained Iago's smiling public visage. It was an extraordinary achievement and possible only for a man with absolute confidence in the carrying power of his voice and personality.

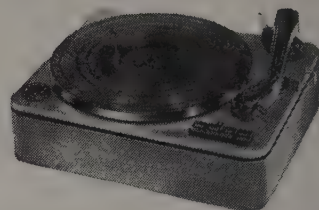
It was not always thus. When Warren entered the Metropolitan Opera Auditions of the Air on a dare in 1938, he knew a total of eight arias and not one complete role, and the extent of his musical experience was a term in the Radio City Music Hall Glee Club spent mostly envying the soloist, a young tenor named Jan Peerce. His voice astounded the judges—Wilfred Pelletier thought somebody had sneaked in a recording of Giuseppe de Luca—and Warren was awarded a contract calling for seven roles the next season. He left immediately for Italy to learn them. There he met the girl he soon married, singing student Agathe Leiffen, who became and remained a vital associate, teaching, soothing, interceding. "*Pacienza, Leonard,*" she would say, and things would take a calmer tack.

He needed this kind of help badly in the difficult first years. Blessed with a voice he admitted was the greatest baritone in the world, he was also driven by a ferocious urge to artistic and personal eminence. Some of the entrenched nobility didn't make things easier for the young man, but he persisted. When others hired a clique, so did he—and continued to, even when it was no longer necessary. When others stormed, he remembered. Most of all, he pried and examined and learned.

"In those early days the Met was my whole life. I was there all the time, watching,

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Model 360, \$180; Matching cabinet, \$20

**Series 380, AM/FM Stereophonic Tuner** Permits use of AM and FM sections individually for monophonic broadcasts or simultaneously for AM/FM stereo programming. Jewel lights indicate mode of operation. This highly competent "front end" unit provides high sensitivity and selectivity, extra outputs for multiplex and AM/FM stereo, and "Dual Stereoscopic" tuning indicator.



Model 380, \$160; Matching cabinet, \$20

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listening. Today at rehearsal I saw two young baritones off playing pinochle when they weren't singing. Why weren't they in the wings or in the audience? When I was in my twenties I saw that there were certain places on stage where you would never see Ezio Pinza. I asked myself why, and I knew I was going to find out." Warren always had a facility for disassembling and assembling things like clocks and motors; he did the same thing not only to the performances of every one of his contemporaries but to the Met stage itself. "I tried to analyze what every artist before me had experienced, and then I took that stage apart and put it to-



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## FOLKWAYS

*Continued from page 44*

came in Kingston, N. Y., where he was a band mascot and helped move the drum. But Asch's interest in varying cultures was mainly shaped during his four years spent in the cosmopolitan atmosphere of the Technical College in Bingen-on-Rhine, Germany, where he was the only American among students from many countries.

After completing his training in electronics, Asch returned to the United States in 1926. He worked for a year for the Radio Corporation of America, then for several radio stores and manufacturers. In the early Thirties, Asch formed his own company, Radio Laboratories, to manufacture electronic equipment. Subsequently he moved his Brooklyn office to the same tired-looking building on West Forty-sixth Street where Folkways is now and which then housed—as it still does—radio station WEVD. Asch began to produce recordings and transcriptions. His first commercial recording, of the Barry Sisters, dates from 1937, and in 1939 he produced his first recording on the Asch label—stories from the Bible, written by his father and called *In the Beginning*. In the next six years about a hundred titles were released, including children's records, classical music, spoken word discs, jazz, and authentic folk music.

Problems involved in the allocation of shellac, a then scarce material, were the undoing of the Asch label. But a new setup was soon to be established, the Disc Company of America. Some of the material from the Asch label was brought out, and a whole series of the Norman Granz "Jazz at the Philharmonic" programs were issued. Unfortunately, the company overextended itself. The overhead got over its head, the recording ban of the American Federation of Musicians began to pinch, and the *coup de grâce* was a bad snowstorm in December of 1947 that snarled local distribution. Although Disc had been doing a business of a million dollars a year on paper, there was a very real deficit of \$300,000 staring Asch in the face, and bankruptcy followed.

Yet Asch was a fighter, and there were things he wanted to do, particularly with the age of the LP just around the corner. With the direct help of Jack Kapp of Decca and the indirect assistance of Sam Goody and of George Mendelssohn of Vox Records, Folkways was formed. It is financially independent today.

Moe Asch, an associate remarked recently, "makes records to make money to make more records." Folkways has enjoyed a steady rise in sales each year, but in keeping its whole catalogue constantly available it finds itself continually shifting money from one pocket to the other. Many performers have muttered about the slowness of royalty payments, but all are agreed that Asch is scrupulously honest. Aside from an art collection and all the convention-traveling, Asch appears to pour all his profits right back into Folkways.



A frequent complaint registered against Folkways is that the engineering, quality of the pressings, and surfaces of its records are inadequate. While there has been significant progress in this sphere since some of the more high-fidelity-conscious companies such as Riverside, Tradition, Elektra, and Vanguard got into the folk field, this technical hurdle has still to be met head on. In part, the alleged sonic deficiencies of Folkways recordings may spring from the belief there that content is more important than form.

Asch has an almost fanatical belief in improvisation. He wants a fresh and spontaneous sound from his performers. This comes naturally on the bulk of field recordings received from all over the world. But the same insistence dominates in a recording session of a professional singer in a New York studio. Whereas Asch will often produce a record from a session that took only two hours to tape, Elektra and Vanguard will spend seven to ten times that amount of time on their folk discs. Asch has taken the perhaps mistaken point of view that spontaneity means spontaneity in one trip to the bat. When it succeeds, it is very successful. When it doesn't, it could be improved upon but often isn't.

Another irksome problem for the non-specialist listener to Folkways records is that to make his social documentation complete, Asch will often buy tapes from downright incompetent singers who know material no one else has come forward to record. Scholars interested in Ohio historical songs, say, will listen to an album that represents a lifetime of collecting by one Anne Grimes; musically, it may be an excruciating experience.



Folkways believes its product is a vital one in education. With so much of his material designed as curriculum aids, Asch issues with each album a booklet of notes whose completeness is quite distinctive in the field. These booklets run as long as twenty pages, often with discographies, footnotes, headnotes, illustrations, reproductions of old prints, manuscripts, and anything else of value. Rich as the Folkways annotations are, however, there has been some carping in academic circles that they don't always quite hit the mark—that more editorial supervision would make the albums really “definitive.”

To all this, praise and criticism alike, Asch is alternately hot and cold. More often than not, he will shrug off a suggestion one day, put it into practice the next. Meanwhile, he is working away at new recordings—a classical music appreciation series, a documentary for children called *The Laundry and the Bakery*, spoken word albums in Spanish, Greek, and Russian, far-ranging ethnic collections, etc.

*Continued on next page*

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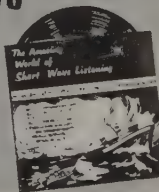
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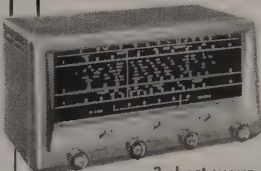
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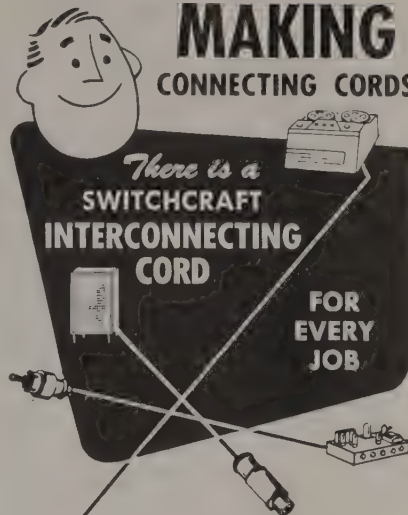
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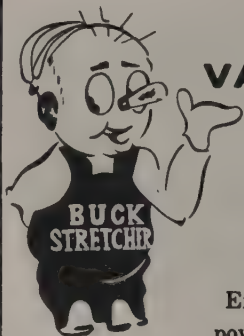
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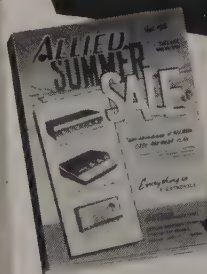
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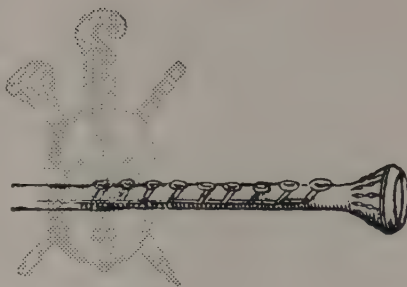
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## FOLKWAYS

*Continued from preceding page*

And then Asch is thinking about the large  
and thorny area of more reissues of old 78s.  
The Folkways six-disc *Anthology of American  
Folk Music* is the bible of the city folk  
singer, representing a whole world of song  
taken from 78s of the 1920s and 1930s.  
Releasing that anthology and the widely  
praised jazz series involved Asch in all sorts  
of feuds and litigations with record compa-  
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wonderful old records. Asch is not dismayed.  
"This music belongs to no one record com-  
pany, it belongs to the American people.  
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LP, I will," he says, with the righteous de-  
fiance of a crusader. Yet, and this is typical,  
he would be just as satisfied if RCA Victor  
and Decca, for example, were to reissue  
their old folk music records on LP.

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and his accomplishments has been offered  
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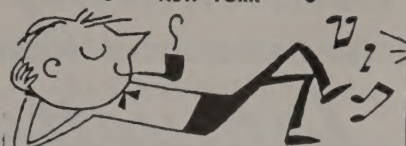
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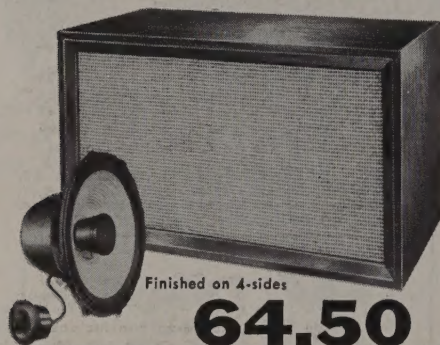
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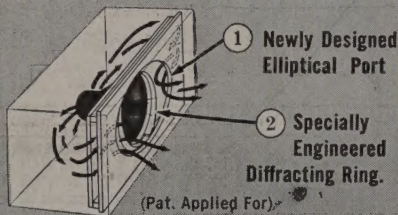
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
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